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Preview 2003

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plus:
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- HOW-TO: Power Commander Installation

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August 2002 $3.99

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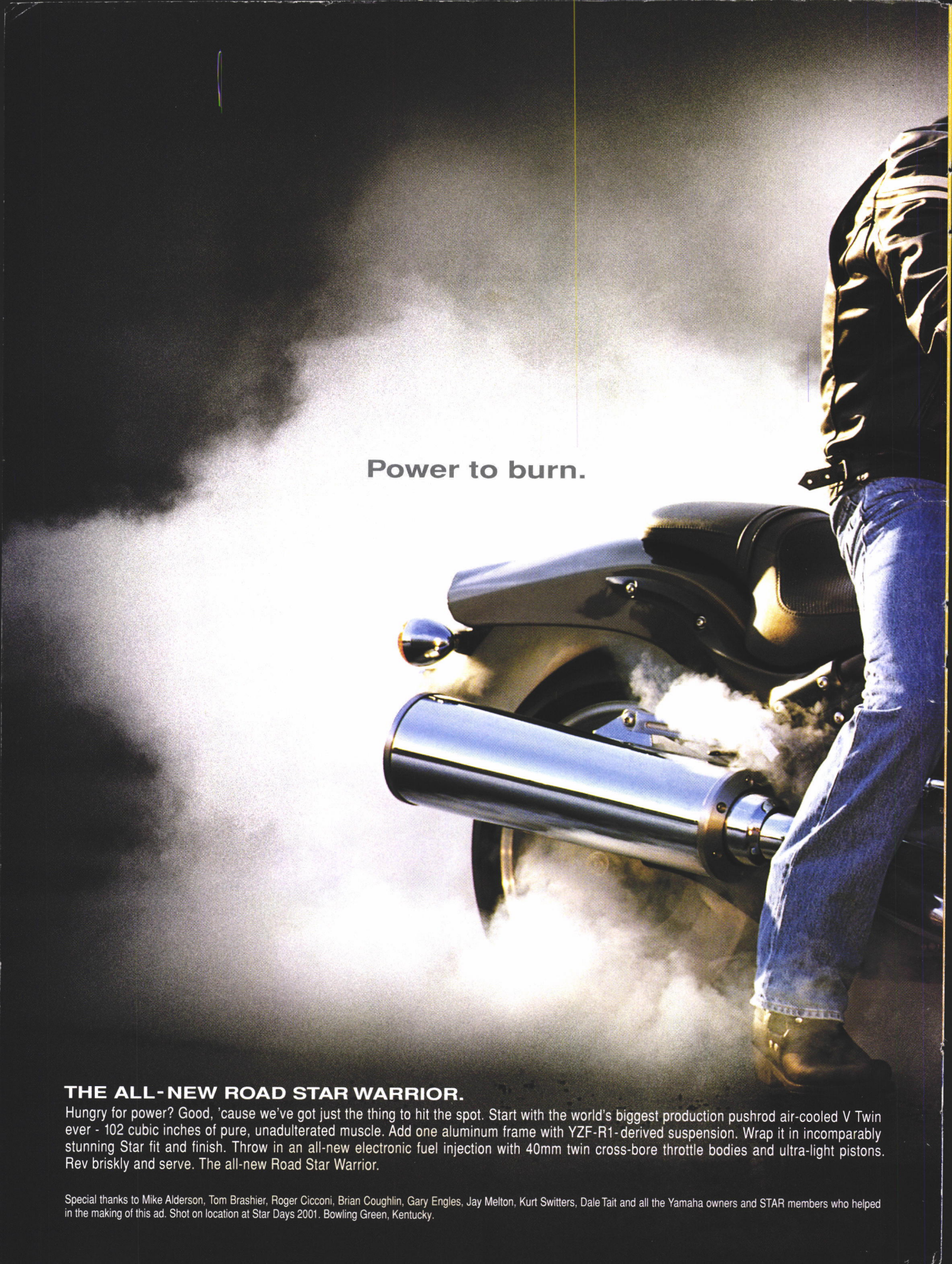

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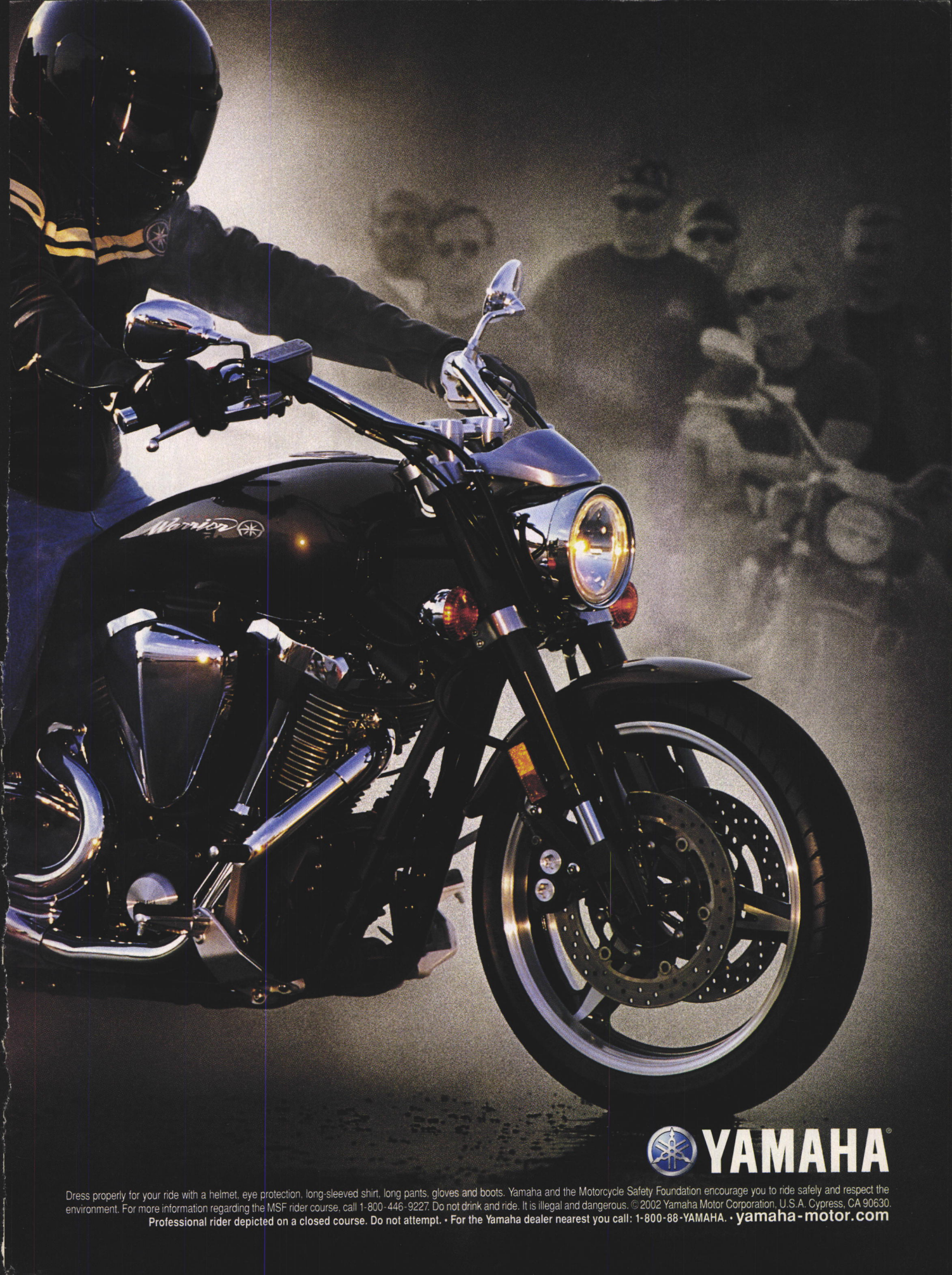

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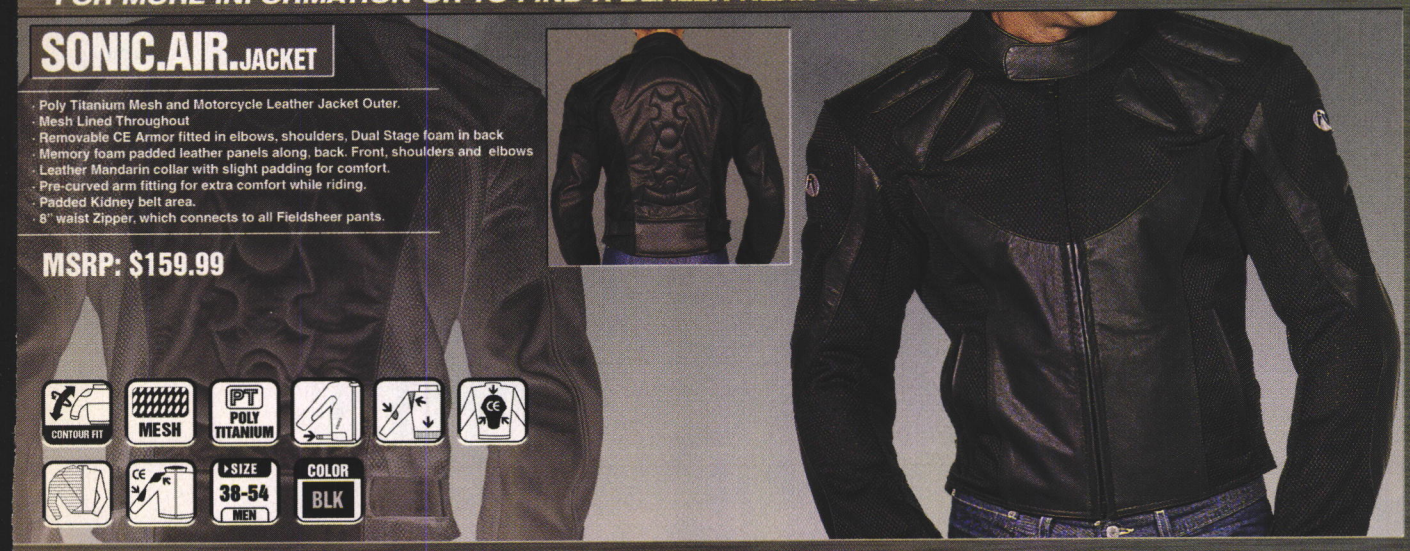

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August 2002

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Actions depicted in *Motorcyclist* are taken under controlled conditions and are posed for by professional riders wearing proper gear, and aging editors trying to recapture their former glory. Whippersnappers and other upstarts should not attempt to duplicate them; doing so may be dangerous.

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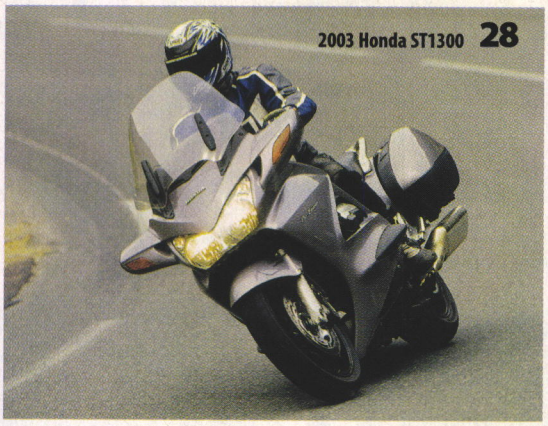

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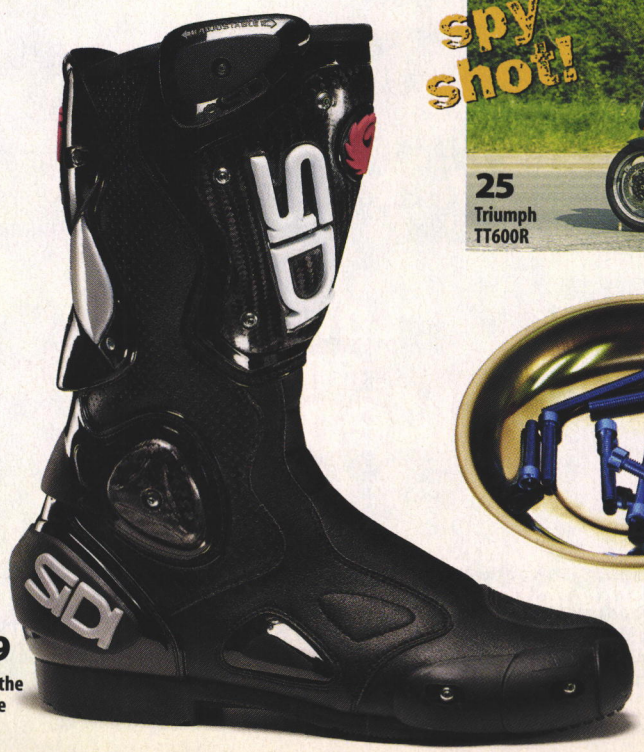

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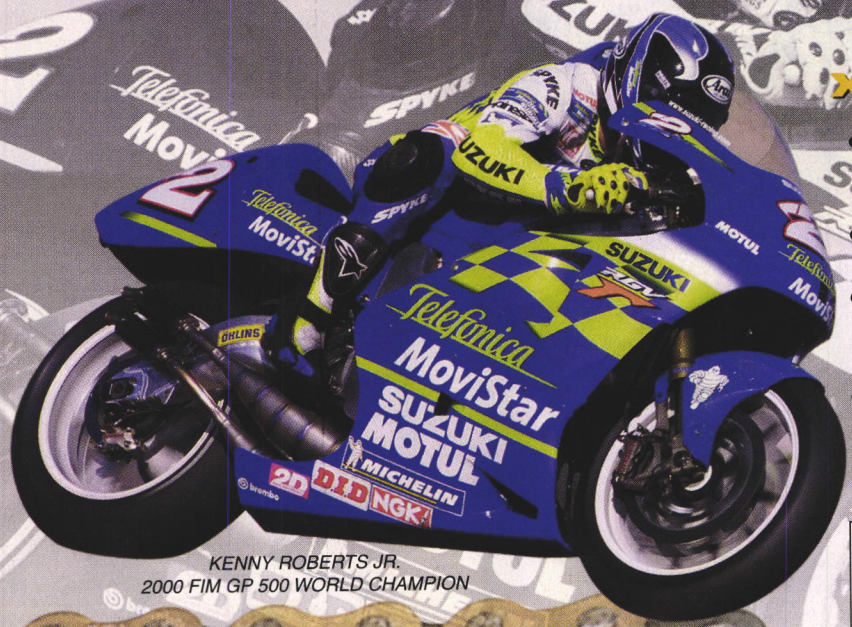
Air to the Throne

on the cover

Kevin Wing's awesome shot of Buell's XB9R Firebolt proves the point that certain streetbikes—and this is one of them—simply make you do bad things. Sorry, *good* things.

D.I.D IS THE ROAD RACING CHAMPION



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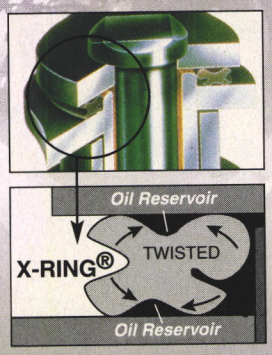

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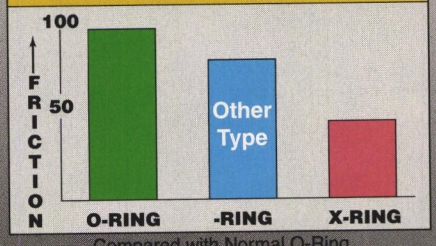

Compared with Normal O-Ring

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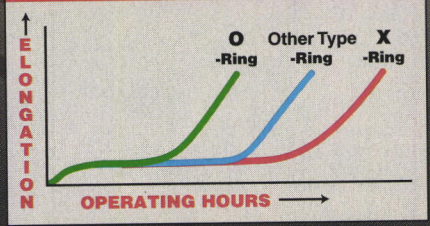

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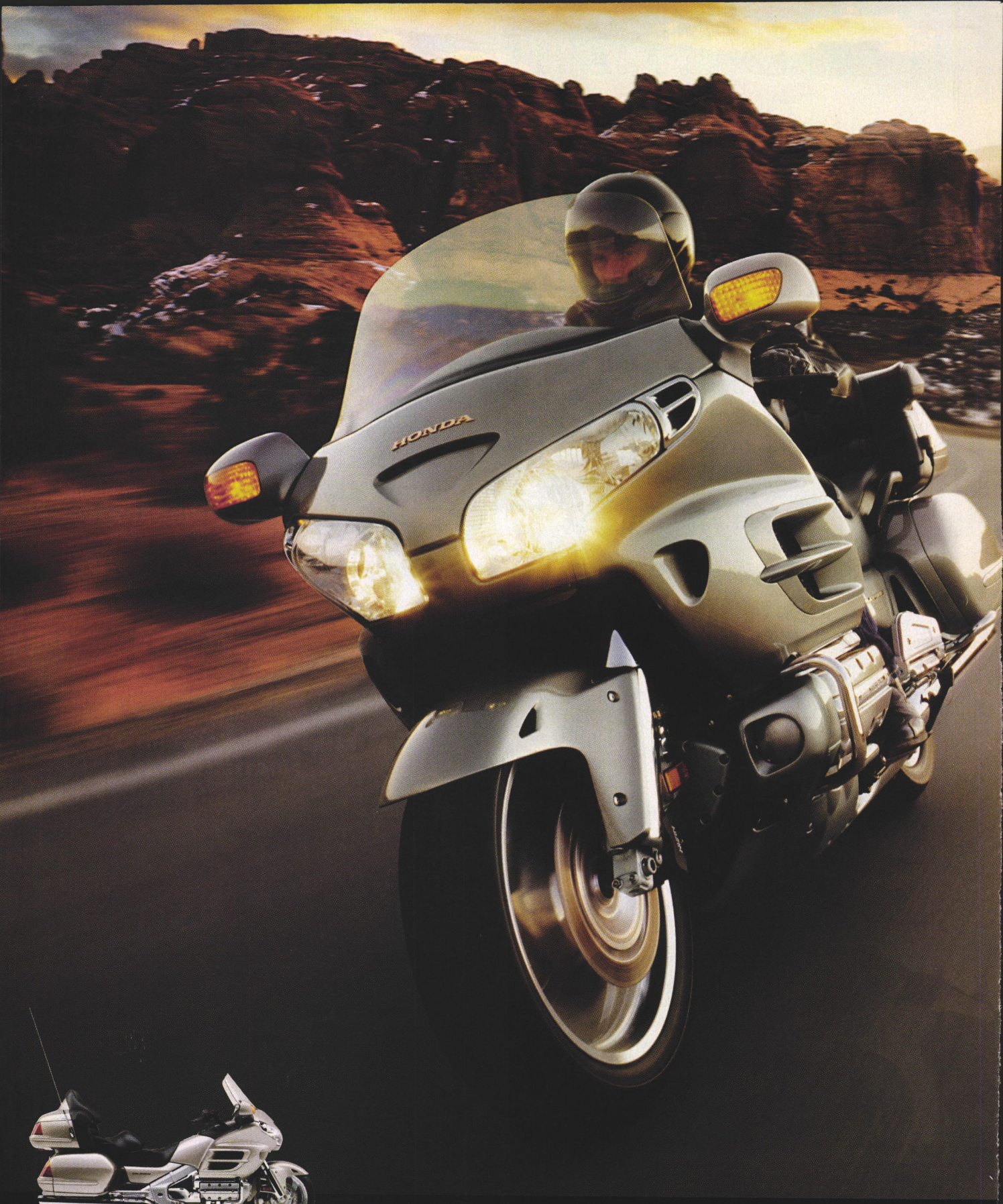

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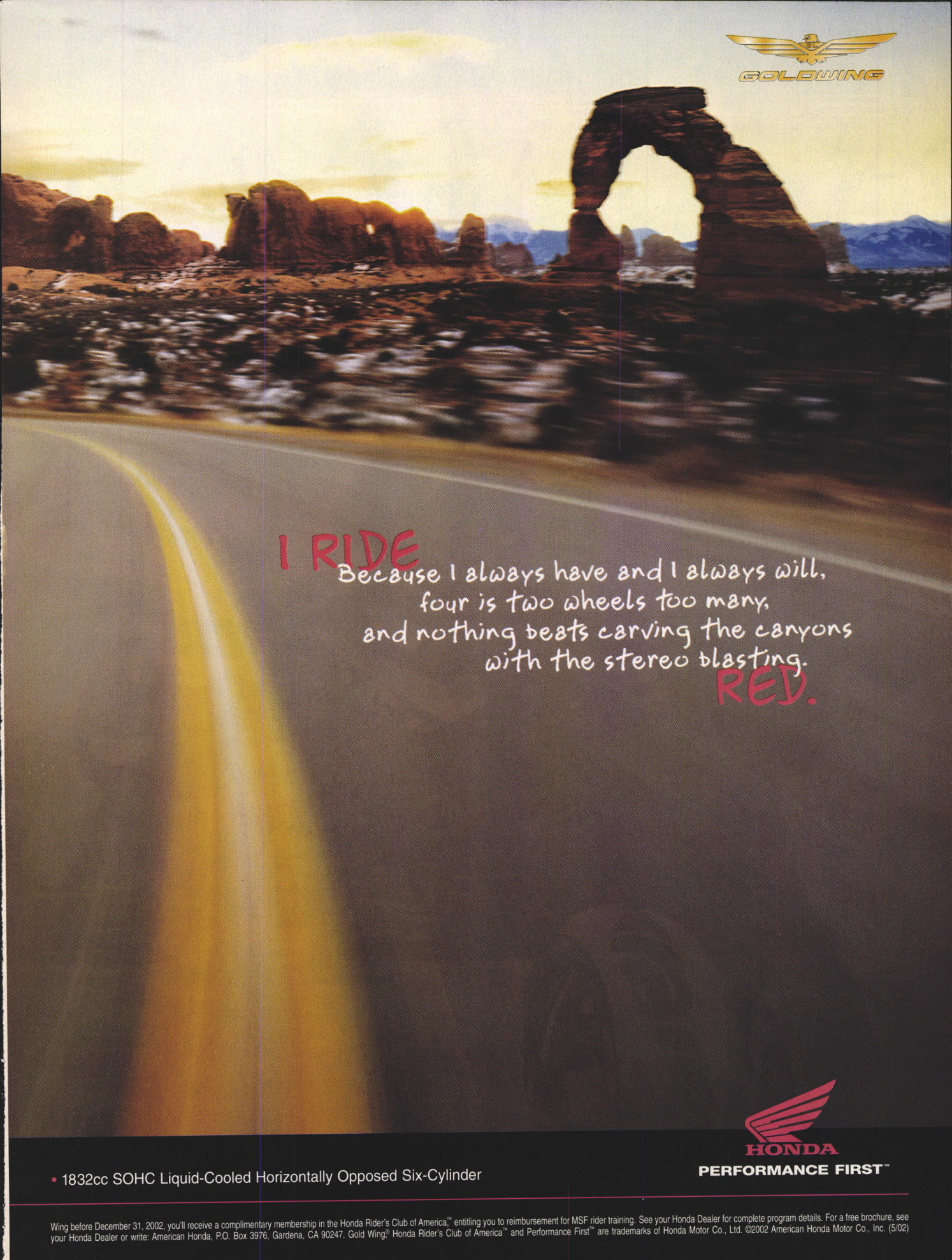
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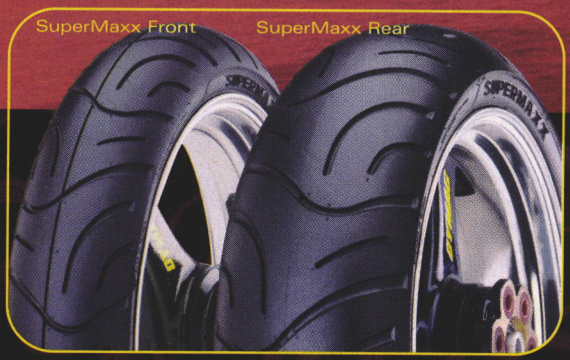

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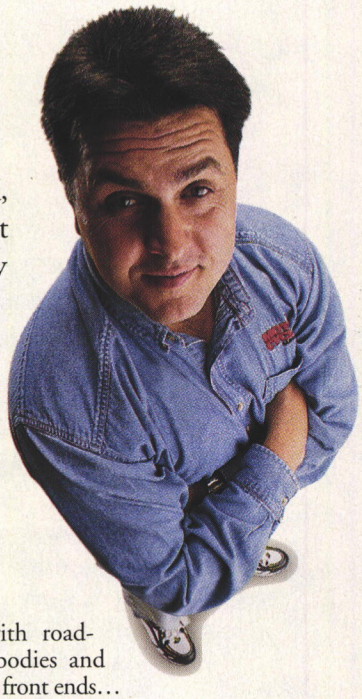
We're B-B-Bad



IT ISN'T ABOUT A SPECIFIC LOOK, or the lack of a fairing. Can't be about a paint job, or a bike's membership in any specific streetbike category. And it's not due to a particular exhaust note, or the letters on a fuel tank.

Nope, the whole "Hooligan" thing—at least in the relatively harmless way we look at it—simply boils down to the number of wheels in question. Can't be anything but. If it was about aesthetics, auditory character or some old black-and-white Marlon Brando movie I wouldn't have done those donuts through Mr. Smith's thoroughly soggy lawn on my Honda SL70 way back in 1972. Or left lurid black marks exiting all of Coldwater Canyon's hairpins on a Yamaha V-Max during my first year as a green *Motorcyclist* staffer in '85.

Consciously or not, every motorcyclist—from the 18-year-old on the Suzuki GSX-R (conscious) to the old-timer with the milk crate strapped to his decrepit Honda CB350 (not)—understands the Hooliganesque potential packaged between his (or her) axles. It's just *in* there.

It starts early, too. I think most of the Hooligan behavior we see today has its roots in the '60s and '70s, and is directly traceable to time spent on a Schwinn Stingray. Mine certainly did. I clearly remember how the surrounding terra firma looked as I sailed over seven garbage cans (a neighborhood record!) on my blue Stingray. I remember being *so* pumped—right up until my buddy David Pavlovich jumped over eight, and I crashed (helmetless, of course) trying to equal his feat.

Two-wheelers, motorized or not, just make you wanna do crazy stuff.

Yeah, some take things too far. The recent Laughlin, Nevada, incident (see this month's Déjà View column) is just the latest example. Fortunately, most of the behavior I'm referring to is innocent stuff—and Big Fun, which is exactly the spirit in which we've produced this issue's cover story, which begins on page 40.

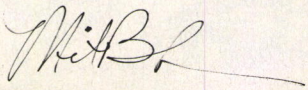
Of course, I can already hear the whining, hand-wringing and accusations of hypocrisy. We don't practice what we preach. The crossed-up images in our magazine lead young (and old) skulls full of mush down a dangerous path, one littered with road-rashed bodies and snapped front ends... yadda yadda yadda.

Several months ago I had the opportunity to speak at a motorcycle-industry symposium. The subject was the enthusiast press' "responsibility," and the challenge to "balance what [our] readership desires and its potential impact to public opinion of motorcycling."

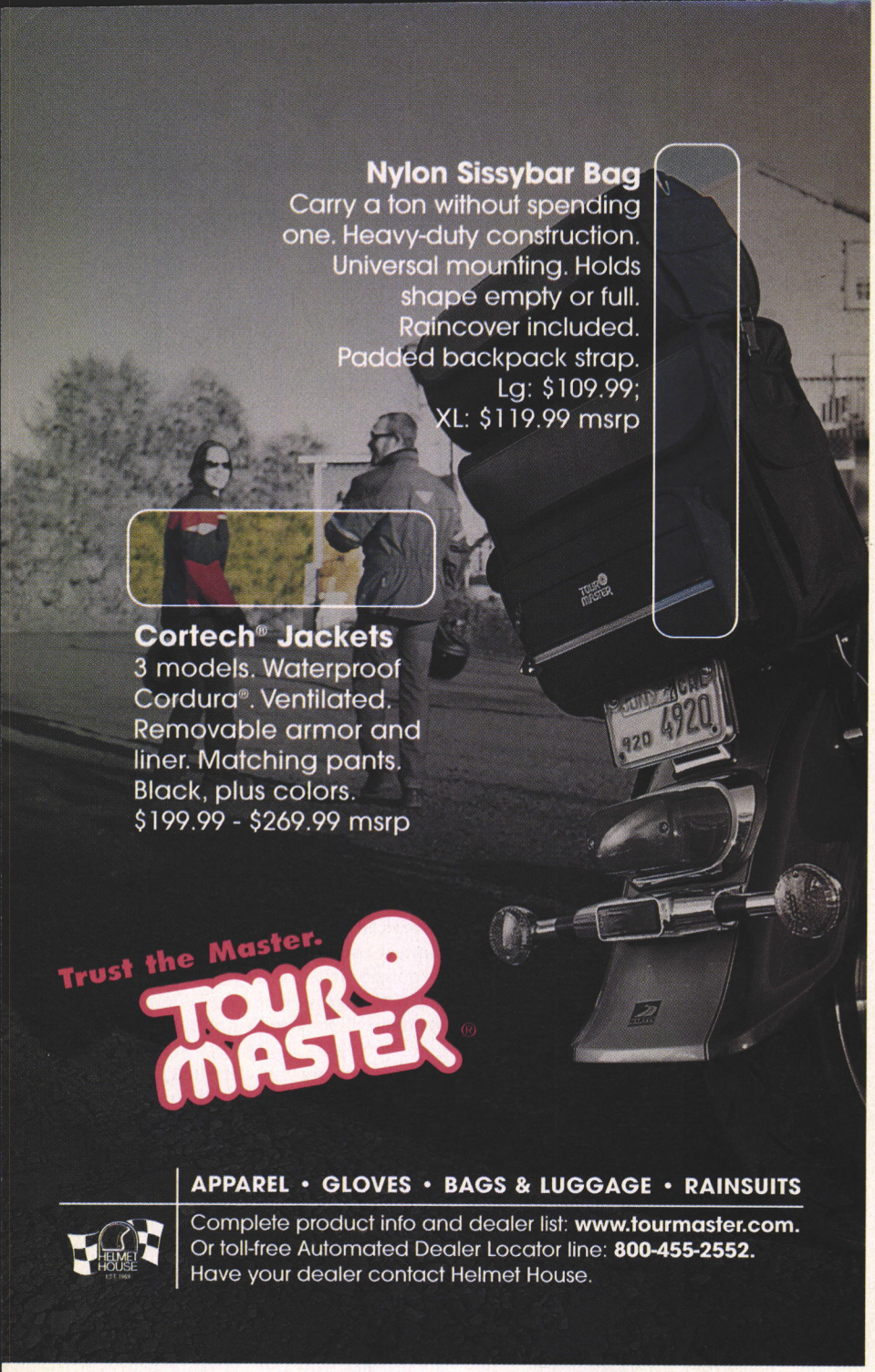
I told the group it definitely *is* a challenge to successfully mix excitement with a modicum of responsibility. Then I outlined the two-pronged approach I feel this magazine takes to remain viable: basically, to provide the streetbike-based entertainment and information our readers demand, *while at the same time* highlighting more industry-friendly messages such as personal responsibility, street survival, the necessity of wearing protective gear and getting real training, and other issues related to what I call proper "two-wheeled citizenship." To ignore the "citizenship" messages would be grossly irresponsible, to our readers and to the industry. To concentrate on them at the expense of our core editorial product would be economic suicide.

One last thing: Please welcome Tim Carrithers back to *Motorcyclist*. Carrithers's wealth of experience and enthusiasm will undoubtedly help us craft this dual message in the most powerful way possible.

Ride well.



Mitch Boehm, Editor in Chief



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PRIMEDIA

déjà view

by Patrick Bodden
Motoculture

The Dark Side

"Violence is as American as cherry pie."—H. Rapp Brown.

EXTREMES EXIST EVEN IN THE RATHER SPECIAL AND narrowly defined world of motorcycles and what it means to be a motorcyclist. These extremes have rarely been more vividly illustrated than recently near Las Vegas, Nevada, which, somehow, seems oddly appropriate.

The prestigious Venetian Hotel is the current venue for the Guggenheim's *Art of the Motorcycle* exhibition. The exhibition covers what is exceedingly fine about motorcycling: its artifacts from the first to the last; seductive and compelling texts and images of its myth and history; its value as a cultural icon of the modern era; indeed, the motorcycle as an art object saturated with excitement, meaning and, when all the conditions are just so, terrific beauty.

Ninety miles to the south, in the gambling resort of Laughlin, Nevada, the also prestigious Harrah's Hotel played host to something entirely different: the latest horrifying display of outlaw motorcycle gang violence. On April 27 at 2:00 A.M. in the middle of the hotel's casino, a lethal and savage confrontation with guns and knives between rival Hells Angels and Mongol gang members left three dead (two Angels and one Mongol) and the casino floor littered with weapons and blood. The event, violent as it was, was all the more compelling by virtue of its association with a subculture of motorcyclists, of hard-core bikers—the mythical 1 percent. It's a disturbing flashback to a similar manifestation of Hells Angels-related violence: the stage-side killing of a concertgoer at the Rolling Stones Altamont Speedway show in California in 1969. The film *Gimme Shelter* is one look at the Altamont disaster.

I had come to perceive outlaw motorcycle gangs (or OMGs, as they're referred to by people who study such things) as having largely faded from the scene, lapsing more into a myth from the past than constituting a present-day menace. The threat of OMGs being more perceived than real has been further bolstered during the last decade by the ever larger number of motorcyclists who are intent on imitating that 1 percent. There may be 500,000 or so convincing-looking examples at Daytona during Bike Week, but the majority of biker activities on Main Street has evolved (or devolved, depending on which side of the law you're positioned, and your sense of authenticity) into a G-rated affair. This has rendered the scene on Main Street a crashing bore. Say what you will of violent and aberrant behavior, it is nothing if not fascinating, whether state-sanctioned (wars and executions) or criminal (wars and executions). And one doesn't have to be either condoning or perverse to find such behavior interesting, culturally relevant, and worth studying and documenting.

But for such an exploration to be potentially valuable (or even feasible), a clear sense of one's self and the underlying foundation of one's social and moral values are probably indispensable. "When you look into the abyss, the abyss also looks into you," Friedrich Nietzsche writes in one of his works in a suggestively chilling way.

I haven't looked into the abyss, lately. Therefore, I don't claim to have recently made an exhaustive study of the dark side of motorcycling. I've been busy.

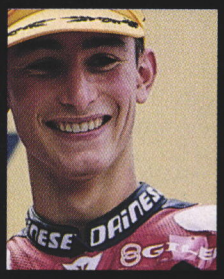
Apparently, so have the OMGs. Even a cursory exploration of their online presence reveals they are thriving, even if still few in number in relative terms. The "Big Four," as they are sometimes referred to (the Hells Angels, Outlaws, Pagans and Bandidos), are still present, with the Mongols looking to make the list. And despite efforts during the '70s and '80s by law-enforcement agencies at all levels to dismantle them, motorcycle gangs have undergone considerable expansion in recent years. The Hells Angels alone have seen their numbers double from 1000 to 2000 in the past decade. The expansion has not been in numbers only; OMGs have also expanded geographically into Canada, naturally enough, but also into such countries as Germany, France, Norway, Denmark, countries as improbable as Liechtenstein and Switzerland, and continents as far away as Australia.

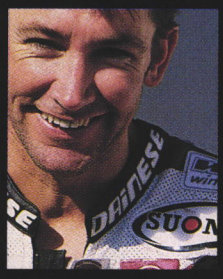
ROBIN REID

I had come to perceive outlaw motorcycle gangs...as having largely faded from the scene, lapsing more into a myth from the past than constituting a present-day menace.

The expansion, not surprisingly, has engendered death and destruction beyond U.S. borders, as competing gangs jockey for position and bigger shares of local criminal assets and revenues (if you accept the theories posited by authorities), or because of nothing more complicated than alpha-dog fights, over who-knows-what exactly, as some suggest. The situation in Canada has been particularly bloody, with casualties ranging from 100 to 150 over the past eight years. And in Denmark, an antitank missile fired over the heads of the police blasted through the wall of the Danish Hells Angels headquarters during a party, killing two (including one innocent bystander) and, with grenade shrapnel fly-

continued on page 94





He who laughs first laughs best.

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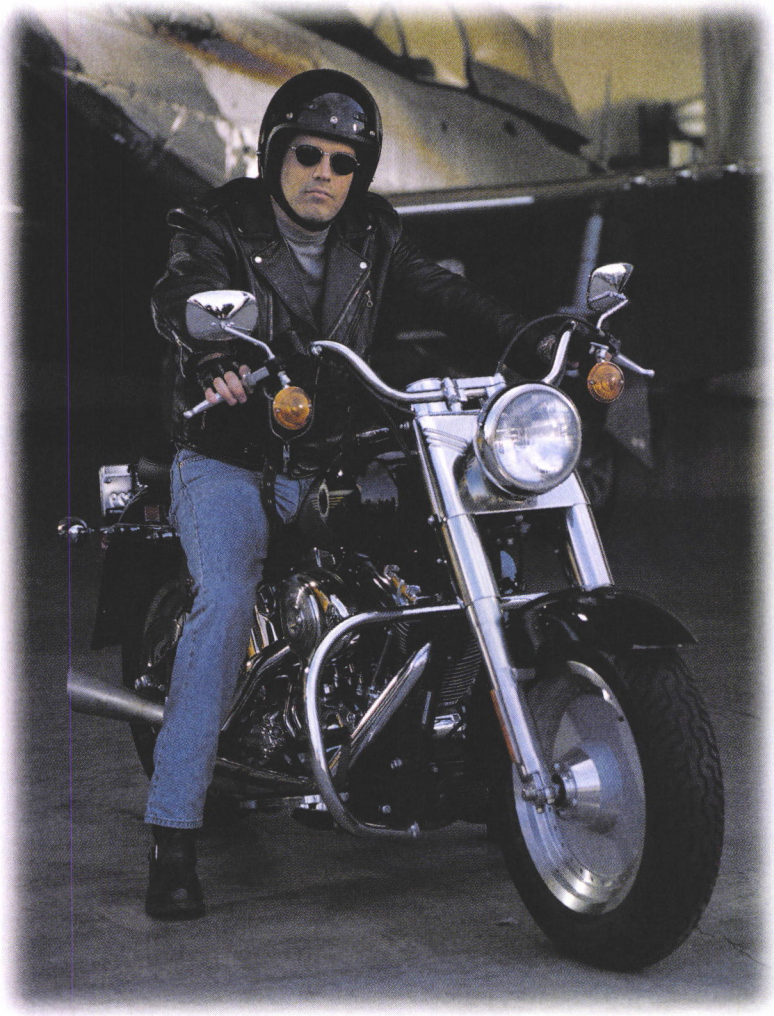

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SUPERBIKES 2002

Kawasaski isn't really trying to keep up in the street-superbike race. In fact, I bought my 2000-spec ZX-9R as a comfortable sport-tourer, not a superbike. But I'm a little confused by the results in your "Superbikes 2002!" story (June 2002). I

expected the Kawasaki to come in last, and it did. But by your numbers it shouldn't have. The 9R's quarter-mile time of 10.16 was 0.04 seconds faster than the CBR's. The 9R's Willlow Springs time of 1:30.17 was 0.87 seconds faster than the YZF-R1's and only 0.02 seconds slower than the CBR's. Along with the most comfortable ride and best wind protection, the 9R should have placed higher. What's up?

Barry Beckemeyer
Sacramento, CA

Like most Kawasaki owners that'll write in, I'm here to demand a little respect. How can a bike that is "a generation behind the others" come in just 0.02 seconds slower than the Honda at Willow Springs? Maybe the CBR was slowed slightly by all the cash they've been padding your bums with!

Jason "Tex" Bishop
Woodbury, MN

As we've written 100 times (pay attention!), comparison-test winners and losers aren't chosen on performance numbers alone. Although the ZX-9R packs a lot of all-around performance (something that's been true for years), the unanimous feeling among the many folks that actually rode *and* evaluated *the thing is the 9R is, well, "a generation behind the others." That doesn't mean it's a bad motorcycle. Riding all four bikes back-to-back tells quite a different tale than lonely numbers on a magazine page, Bishop. —Ed.*

It was no surprise to see that the big GSX-R did it again. What really chaps my hide is that you didn't have the *cajones* to declare a "true" second place, I mean…a *tie?* What is that? I can't believe I gave up studying for my biochemistry final for this! Pull up your skirts, boys!

Nate Pochucha
Moorhead, MN

The cover of your May 2002, issue says "The New R1" in bold letters, with "152 hp" right below. Yet, in the June issue's Superbike comparo the YZF-R1 dynoed at 136.8 horsepower. That's a dramatic difference. I would be disappointed if I bought the R1 in May and then read the June issue only to find out the GSX-R smoked it. If the May issue number is "claimed" horsepower, then why is there such a big difference from the actual dynoed number?

Matt Peluso
Toronto, Canada

Once again, "claimed" horsepower is taken (calculated, really) by a bike's manufacturer at the crankshaft, while "actual," real-world horsepower numbers are measured by real, live magazine staffers (Cook, Carrithers, Norem, et al.) on a real, live dynamometer, in our case our own Super-Flow CycleDyn dyno.—Ed.

OFFENSE, DEFENSE

Re: Boehm's June 2002 issue Lean Angle. Thanks for flipping on that light switch. I get it now! I commute daily on my '96 VFR, laptop strapped on the back, and it's usually one of the highlights of my day. I seem to always be in a hurry, to get to work, to get to my daughter's softball game, but riding in traffic seems to make me more focused than ever. I'm not squidly, I don't drag peg feelers, I wear all the gear all the time, and I don't take unnecessary risks—but I do move through traffic. However, I have noticed that on the few occasions I tell myself I'm in no rush, to just go with the flow of traffic, there's no need to lane-split up to that stoplight, I have always had an uneasy feeling; triple-checking my mirrors to see if the car pulling up behind me was actually going to stop before squishing me up against the car in front of me; wondering if I have worked my way into the most visible spot in the window of the SUV wavering in the lane next to me; and before I know it, I'm back to my normal "offense, defense" style of riding—and feeling much safer. An active throttle, or brake, has spared me countless close calls, or possibly worse. Every time I'm in a car with a nonriding driver and I tell them to watch out and slow down for some truck ahead—and then the truck does exactly what I said it would do—it always amazes them. I just tell them to ride to work every day for a few months and they'll understand.

Jo Cato
San Diego, CA

Boehm's thoughts on "defensive" riding are right on the mark. Assume you're invisible and stay slightly aggressive. I've found that if I'm pushing a little I'm much more likely to be paying attention. It must be working, 'cause I haven't been down for about 32 years—and that was due to a drunk driver coming from the other side of a graded railroad crossing, where I couldn't see him. A lesson from that episode was that it ain't over till it's over; there are choices to be made right up to the moment of impact. I was into the intersection before I saw the guy, knew he was gonna hit me, and wanted to get as much bike past him as I could before he got me. I nailed it. The right corner of his front bumper mashed my right ankle against the engine cases, but I made it approximately 20 yards past the intersection before the rear wheel caught up with the front and I went down. If I'd panicked and hit the brakes he would have run over me. I'll trade a broken ankle for the most beautiful funeral any day. Broken bones heal in time—even ribs.

Harry Smith
Costa Mesa, CA

After 20 years, it's nice to know I'm not crazy—or at least, not alone. I've always found that it's more dangerous to be "good" and stay in one spot in traffic. Every close call I've had happened when I was being a responsible rider. But if I get up a bit of speed and move smoothly through traffic (kind of like a shark cruising through a school of fish), I never have a problem. Unfortunately, Long Island car traffic is now moving so recklessly fast (when it isn't standing still, that is) that I find myself much more on the "defensive" than the "offensive"

these days. Boehm is right: The best way to ride is to be on the offensive. You always do better at the top of the food chain.

Stephanie Feld
Long Island, NY

As an MSF instructor, you hit the nail right on the head. Just don't tell my fellow instructors! I have been riding the way Boehm described for more than 15 years now and still have all limbs intact. An old-timer once told me in an MSF ERC class, "When in doubt, give it gas." It sounds ridiculous coming from an MSF instructor, but I cannot tell you how many times those six words have saved my skin and bones.

Unsigned
Via e-mail

THE BLAME GAME

I would like you to ask your readership to observe a moment of silence in observance of the Suzuki TL1000S' death (and the imminent murder of her sister, the TL-R). I'm asking you to do this because I feel that you, the motorcycle press, had a big role to play in this. While silly (and puny) CBRs, GSX-Rs, YZF-Rs and opulent Dukes are getting all the press, the TL1000S never had a chance. The supposed "tankslappers" are negligible and the Hard Numbers info at the back of the magazine must have been generated by John Burns when he was severely medicated.

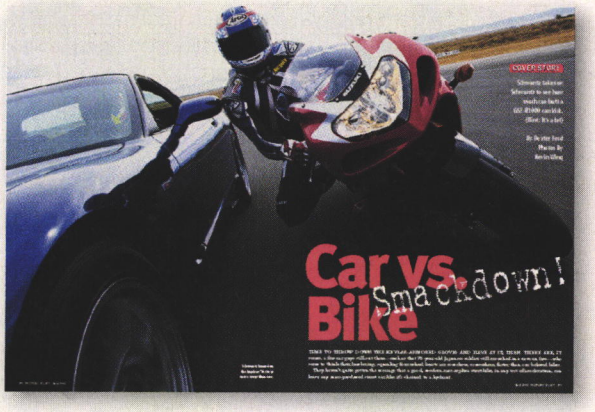
Peter Zieseniss
Huntington Beach, CA

We liked the TL-S a lot when we tested it, and also wrote that the whole "tankslapper" thing existed only in the heads of Brit-bike magazine testers.—Ed.

MORE CAR VS. BIKE

I'm not sure which I enjoyed more, your "Car vs. Bike Smackdown" or the fallout from all the deluded car owners afterward. It did leave a question in my mind, however. Seeing as how you just voted the GSX-R1000 Top Dog in your literbike comparo, just how far down the motorcycle food chain does the 'Vette driver have to go before he can stop averting his gaze at stoplights and maintain a shred of dignity? I imagine it's somewhere between the GSX-R1000 and a Puch moped. My question is, what bike is a closer match to the 'Vette, and how close is it to the moped?

Chris Davidson
Boonton, NJ



The problem car guys have with the car vs. bike comparison is they don't have any concept of the capabilities of modern sportbikes. All car guys (I was one with a

continued on page 99

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Letter of the Month

YOU GO, GIRL!

The letter from Lisa Lomenick taking issue with your reader survey and how the reader is assumed to be of the male persuasion bothered me. Never mind that most people are aware the most common general gender reference is male. I sincerely hope motorcyclists don't think her views are representative of female riders.

Unfortunately, after checking out many of the Web sites for women riders, I'm afraid I'm probably in the minority. Every time I read some woman kvetching because of the raised eyebrows and comments she gets about whether it's her husband's or boyfriend's bike makes me PMS-like bitchy. Lisa, I'm with ya sistah: I commute on a Suzuki SV650 and have invested thousands of dollars in equipment, gear, parts and accessories.

I'll let you in on a well-known fact: We may have come a long way, baby, but the harsh reality is motorcycling is still a male-dominated arena. But that's what makes it so much more rewarding to me as a "girlie girl"—to be able to ride with my husband and his buddies. Let's face it, a woman riding her bike skillfully is *hhhot* (gotta say it like the low-budget sex phone-line commercials). If everyone could do it, they would. That's what makes it that much more of an achievement of overcoming fear and doing something that most people only dream about doing. Be thankful most people associate motorcycles more with guys than chicks. (Dispatch the PC Police! As far as I'm concerned, women who ride bikes are chicks. And chicks kick ass. So sue me.) When you ride, I guarantee drivers notice you quickly, have you in their mirrors more, and are checking you out.

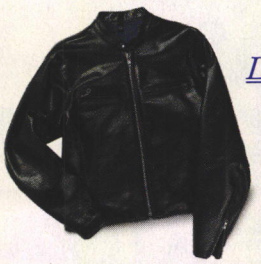
Sound creepy? Sometimes. But it also means you're visible to them. Face it: Guys dig chicks on bikes. Women dig chicks on bikes. I see the smiles and nods of approval and sometimes wistful looks of envy from men and women alike. I know you do, too. When I'm driving in my cage and I see a woman rider, I can't help but smile and think, "You go girl!" I know drivers keep a closer eye on us, for better or worse. I certainly don't gamble my life on my feminine wiles, but I'll take any advantage afforded to me that might keep me more visible and more alive on the road. Does that make me a cunning vixen? I sure hope so!

Men aren't the enemy, and I resent the femi-nazi movement for socializing little girls and boys further into the "everyone is equal, no one is special" collective. Instead of neutering everyone for the sake of equality, accept things, warts and all, for what they are. For God's sake, there's enough dumbing-down going on these days. So when you see an article, or survey or whatever that assumes the rider is a guy, do what I do: Smile and move on. Focus your energies on contacting manufacturers to offer more options for women, e-mail Speed Channel and tell them more motorcycles, less cars. Consider yourself an ambassador on two wheels. And if you educate some small-minded person about women and motorcycles, you've done all right.

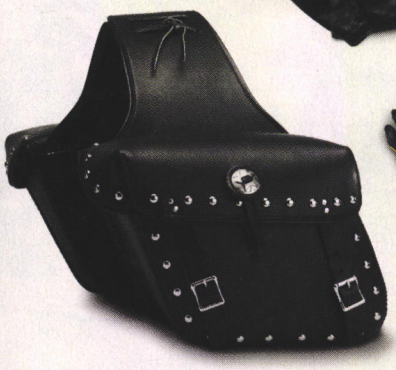
Tomoko Kotaka
Denver, CO

Cruisers

Off-Road Bikes



Leather Jackets



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Up to Speed

compiled by
Josh Norem

JAPAN: Don Helle **EUROPE:** Alan Cathcart and Roland Brown

Triumph Sprint RS.S

exclusive!

A sneak peek at an all-new, soon-to-arrive Triumph via the skunk works of Triumph Italia guru Carlo Talamo

THERE'S A SHIFT IN THE WORKINGS of Triumph, and I don't mean the rapid-fire construction going on to rebuild the section of factory gutted by a recent blaze. To prove it, I was summoned to Hinckley last month for an exclusive look at one of the first new models designed to heat up Triumph's image and expand its range: the Triumph Sprint RS.S, which was waiting for me in prototype form along with its creator, Triumph Italia's Carlo Talamo.

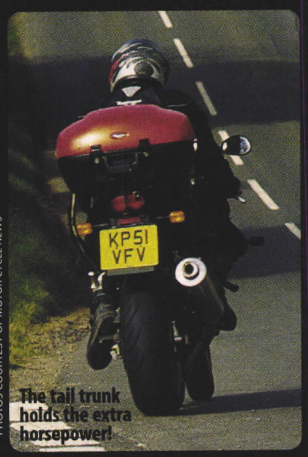
Talamo founded *Numero Uno* in the mid-1980s as Harley-Davidson's official Italian importer, which he turned into one of Harley-Davidson's worldwide success stories. His official Triumph import operation, called *Numero Tre*, which he began a few years ago, has greatly expanded Triumph's presence in the Italian market. Talamo has an influential role at Hinckley as an advisor to John Bloor; he's a guy with a say in what

Triumph's current Sprint RS works well, but looks frumpy doing so.

Triumph's 2003 TT600R

busted!

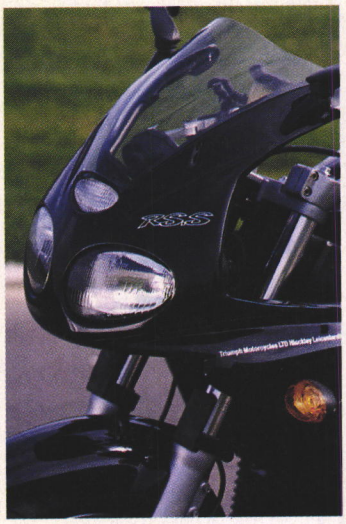
NOW THAT TRIUMPH HAS FINALLY WORKED OUT THE INJECTION PROBlems, the Hinckley firm is preparing to launch a hard-core, track-bred "R" version this fall at Intermot. These pictures show the TT600R's new seat and tailsection, which are much more angular and aggressive than the previous bike's conservatively styled units. The rear brake/tail light will be similar to that of the old Yamaha YZF-R1, with two bulbs flush-mounted and separated by a swath of body-colored plastic. Even more aggressive than the styling will be the new motor, which is said to produce 10 to 15 more horsepower than the old mill. This test mule is reported to use the new engine and seat/tailsection, but everything else is stock TT600 fare. However, the new bike will feature upgraded suspension for better performance at the track, and a completely redesigned front fairing with twin "fox-eye" headlights similar to those on the Daytona 955i. Triumph is reportedly also trying to shave weight everywhere possible, as the TT600 is approximately 25 pounds heavier than the featherweight Yamaha YZF-R6 and Suzuki GSX-R600. Triumph plans to unveil the bike this fall for a spring 2003 release, but will continue to sell the standard TT600 as well as a softer alternative. *—J.N.*



The tail trunk holds the extra horsepower!

PHOTOS COURTESY OF *MOTOR CYCLE NEWS*

Triumph should build next. Talamo has built dozens of imaginative specials over the years, including the Baby Speed (which became the TT600-based Speed Four) and the Bonneville Café Racer, which will likely see production at some point.



PHOTOS BY KYOICHI NAKAMURA

The minimalist fairing and skimpy tailsection Talamo crafted for the RS.S make it a serious looker. The Daytona-spec single-sided swingarm doesn't hurt, either.

"The idea behind the RS.S is to combine passion and style," Talamo says. "It's time to add some sex appeal, and since the triples are the baseline of the company, it made sense to start there. I developed the RS.S styling, creating the prototype for a production Triumph to be built at Hinckley. This is a prototype commissioned by Triumph, and not just another Carlo special!"

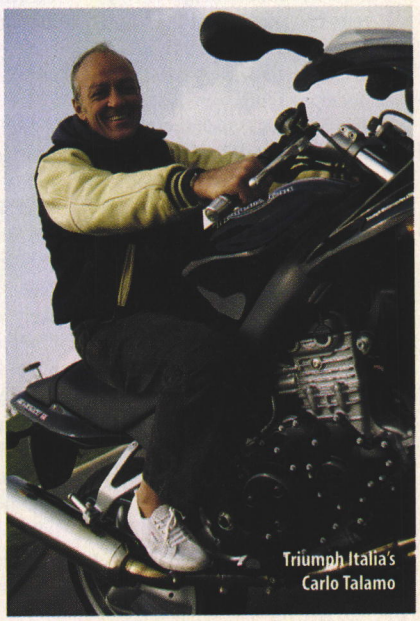
Talamo retained the Sprint RS triple engine and chassis, but changed the fairing and front fender. He retained the distinctive Triumph "face" as well as the stock headlights. A chin spoiler has been added and the plastic fuel tank subtly altered. Taller, Sprint ST handlebars are fitted for a more comfortable riding position, while the turn signals are from the Tiger 955i. Mirrors are stock RS parts, but because the fairing is narrower they don't stick out as far.

The RS.S feels slimmer and lower than the stock bike, though the seat height is unchanged. The new seat is narrower just aft of the fuel tank, making it easier to put your feet on the ground. That makes the RS.S more attractive for shorter riders than the stock RS. The biggest change is the lighter, shorter tailsection. A new subframe carries the reshaped seat and tail unit, incorporating a reversed Speed Triple rear light. The Talamo treatment also includes new footpeg brackets that allow the exhaust cans to be raised. Finally, the stock swingarm is replaced with a beautiful, single-sided Daytona 955i part. The result is sportier, leaner and lighter-looking than the stock Sprint RS.

"Everyone today is building world bikes for the whole planet," Talamo says," but Harley-Davidson's success and profits have come from swimming against this current. It's time for Triumph to swim in the same direction, developing different bikes based on the same platform. John Bloor feels this way. That's why we've created the RS.S, and our customers will be able to buy one in a couple of years. There will be more bikes like this from Triumph in the future—wait and see!"

How long will we have to wait? According to Triumph export boss Ross Clifford, not that long. "This isn't a replacement for the existing RS," Clifford told us. "It's a supplement, rather like an Alpina BMW or AMG Mercedes. But it'll definitely get built for sale in a form pretty close to the way you see it now, probably two years from now."

We can't wait. *—Alan Cathcart*


Triumph Italia's Carlo Talamo

AAA TO THE RESCUE IF YOU'RE READING THIS WHILE STRANDED ON THE SIDE OF THE ROAD IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA, we've got some good news. No, we're not coming to get you, but the Automobile Association of America (AAA) might. Pick up your cell phone, dial (800) AAA-HELP, and tell the person you want to order their new Motorcycle Tow Service. Triple-A recently began offering optional motorcycle and RV towing service to club members in Southern California, which allows up to four motorcycle service calls a year (for a tow, to inflate a tire, etc.). Each service call provides up to $200 worth of service, but if you only use $50 worth you cannot have the rest in cash, sorry (we asked). The motorcycle towing service costs an additional $23 a year, which is a drop in the bucket compared with how much it costs to have your bike towed one time. The service has been available to most of the nation for some time now as part of the RV service package.

Euro Notes

by Alan Cathcart

■ THE BIG DEAL ON THE DUCATI front this month is news of an all-new model under development: the long-awaited street version of the Supermono desmo single, albeit for launch not earlier than 2004. As you may recall, the Supermono was former Ducati guru Massimo Bordi's pet project that, when launched at the '92 Cologne Show, was also current Chief Designer Pierre Terblanche's first-ever Ducati styling job. Only around 70 examples of the high-revving *desmoquattro* 549/572cc road racer (there were two different engine specs) were manufactured in '93–'95, making it the rarest customer Ducati ever built. But in the cash-strapped Castiglioni era, the budget wasn't available to produce the Supermono-with-lights concept that enthusiasts around the world were clamoring for. After the TPG takeover, the company's American management sidelined the project, unconvinced that customers would pay the same price for a four-valve single as they would for a two-valve V-twin such as the 900SS.

Ducati's Supermono. Remember this shape

KEVIN WING

A presentation to Ducati importers around the world at last year's Milan Show revealed an unexpected degree of support for such a model in the company's key markets, and the project was revived. The kicker is the new bike will be delivered in supercharged, 595cc Supermono *Compressore* guise, with a projected power output of approximately 100 hp from a small, light machine weighing less than 330 pounds with full street equipment! Supercharging is now commonplace in the car world, and the technology is much more suited to motorcycle application than a turbo—no throttle lag, no extra heat, only a small weight penalty and relatively little extra bulk.

This makes the idea of a supercharged Ducati single all the more appealing to company management and their dealers, because like the firm's *desmodromic* valve gear, it's a form of technology delivering added performance likely to be unique to the Italian firm's products—especially when combined with the world's most advanced single-cylinder four-stroke engine, developed from its title-winning V-twin superbikes. This engine has its horizontal cylinder retained and upright cylinder replaced by an articulated-conrod counterbalancer, which removes the vibration normally endemic in a four-stroke single—especially one revving as high as 12,000 rpm, as the Supermono did in race form. And by varying boost pressure on the supercharger by linking it to the fuel injection's engine-management system, it gives added ridability as well as improving fuel consumption, while still providing the potential for explosive power in a light bike—the best of both worlds.

Although Ducati CEO Carlo di Biagio has confirmed development of the Supermono *Compressore* is under way, it's not yet certain when the bike will enter production. The supercharged single would also be ideal for female riders, as well as those for whom the bigger (and faster) Ducatis are too expensive, or too fast. Also under development for a likely '03 unveiling are a pair of air/oil-cooled *desmodue* singles based on the Supermono format. It's significant that the development of these new singles coincides with the Italian company's decision to build a V-four MotoGP racer, which in due course will undoubtedly lead to a four-cylinder range of Ducati streetbikes. This overturns a policy decision in force as recently as last June that Ducati would concentrate exclusively on making twin-cylinder motorcycles, and the development of the street singles and Supermono *Compressore* may be seen as a spinoff from that change of policy.

■ Speaking of revitalized Ducatis, the company is planning on announcing the 749R at Intermot in September. The bike will reportedly enter production in January 2003, just in time for homologation for the '04 racing season. The bike's more compact, lighter and more powerful new short-stroke engine has been under development for some time at Ducati Corse's race shop in the Bologna factory, but has sat on the back burner while R&D engineers concentrated on developing the new ultrashort-stroke 104mm-bore 998R Superbike engine being raced this season by works riders Troy Bayliss, Ben Bostrom and Ruben Xaus. The new 749R engine was originally targeted at delivering 10 horsepower more in street guise than the existing 106-hp 748R road model, but development is understood to have gone so well that it's presently delivering 122 hp at 12,000 rpm on the notoriously stingy Ducati dyno, and with a wider spread of power than the existing motor. This will equate to performance in race guise of well in excess of 130 hp—more than enough to redress the balance for the only twin-cylinder Supersport contender against the new generation of fuel-injected, four-cylinder Japanese 600s.

■ The major fire at Triumph's Hinckley factory on March 15 has stopped all production at the British company for an expected four months,and inevitably cut short production of the new TT600-based Speed Four, which had just begun. However, the performance potential of the new model was recently demonstrated by rider Tommy Gallet, who comprehensively defeated a field of Honda 600 Hornets and Yamaha 600 Fazers to win the Roadster Cup 600 support race held on April 13 as a hors d'oeuvre to the Le Mans 24-Hour race. Triumph boss John Bloor will be hoping for a similar result in showrooms when manufacture restarts midsummer. On a similar note, though a race-prepared Daytona 955i triple took part in the 24-Hour main event as the only nonfour-cylinder motorcycle in the entire 56-bike field (no Aprilias, Ducatis, Voxans or Honda V-twins in a grid that was 40 percent Suzuki GSX-R1000s), it failed to finish with a broken gearbox. It was in good company, though: None of the three Hondas that started the race finished either.

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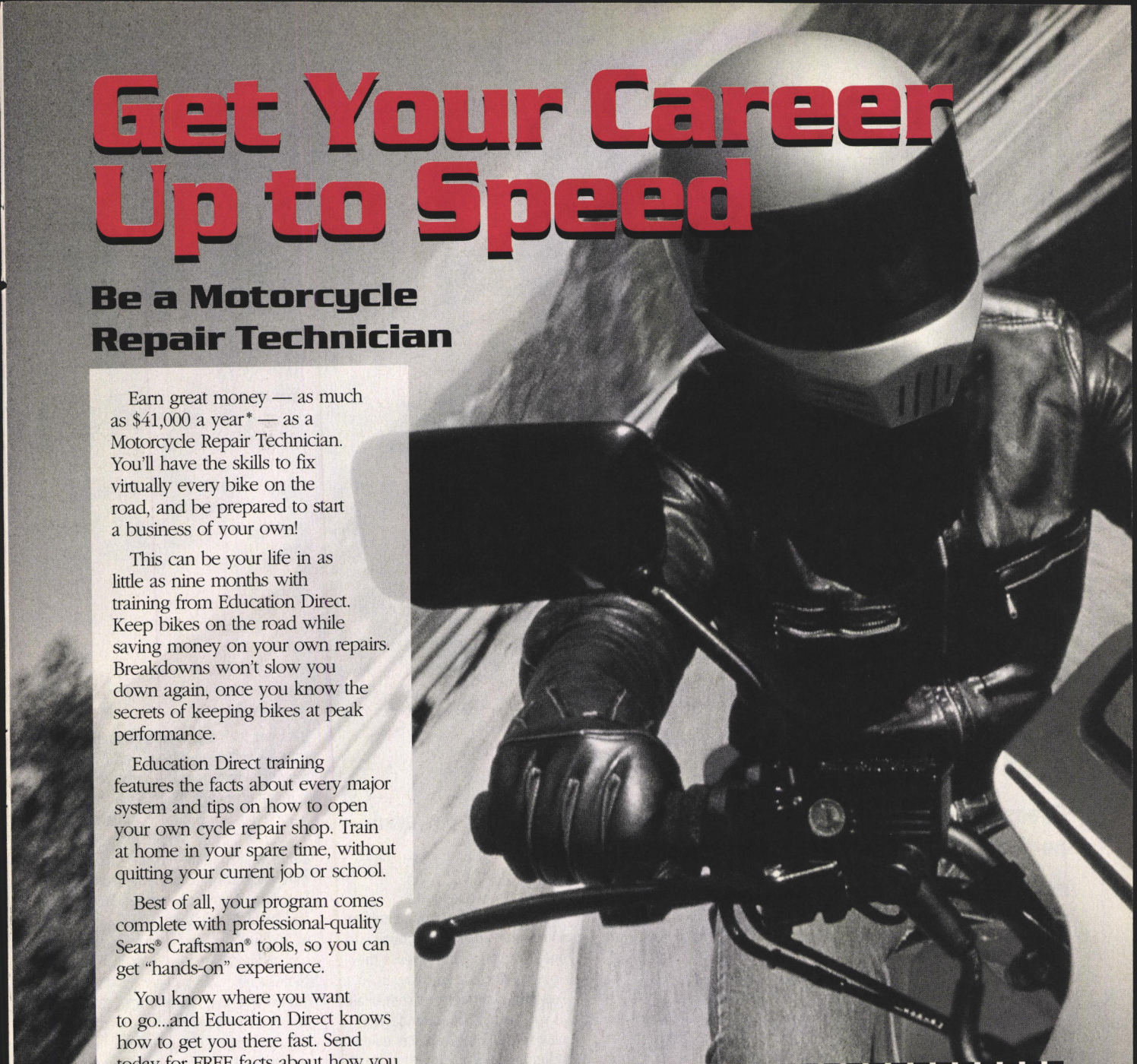

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PHOTOS COURTESY OF *MOTOR CYCLE NEWS*

2003 Honda ST1300

ST fans won't recognize Honda's completely redesigned V-four-powered sport-tourer—but they won't complain when they ride it

***Editor's Note: At presstime, U.S. journalists hadn't yet ridden the new ST1300, so here's a snippet from our friends at* Motor Cycle News.**

AT LONG LAST, HONDA HAS GIVEN ITS flagship sport-tourer a complete makeover. In fact, only one part of the new-for-2003 ST1300 is shared with the venerable ST1100: the lever that folds out on the left side to help you lift the bike on to the centerstand.

FIRST RIDE

The change most folks will care about, of course, is the motor. We're happy to report, then, the new engine bears only a superficial resemblance to the old bike's. With a bigger bore and longer stroke, the ST1300's longitudinal V-four displaces 1261cc, up from the ST1100's 1084cc. Power is up to 125 horsepower at the crank, compared with roughly 100 hp on the old bike. Weight has dropped by 11 pounds on the standard bike and 19.8 pounds on the ABS version, but it's still a hefty 618 pounds dry, a number that should translate to a fully fueled weight of approximately 670–680 pounds. That's 30–40 pounds heavier than Yamaha's FJR1300, a bike the ST1300 will surely be shopped against.

The ST1300 offers a 7.5-gallon fuel tank, two gallons of which are carried in a separate tank buried way down between your feet. Other big changes include a stiff, new aluminum frame and a seat with three height settings, which not only allow up and down movement but fore and aft settings, also.

The bike we rode was the standard model without ABS, which doesn't come with an electrically adjustable windscreen. Adjusting it is not a matter of simply having to stop, release a thumb-clip and setting the new screen position, either. No, it's a screwdriver job that takes 10 minutes. The ABS model (which is $1500 more) does offer an electrically adjustable windscreen, though after our experiences with the Yamaha FJR, folks might be better off without it. Set it where it works best and forget about it.

On the road, just drop items like your wallet and mobile phone into one of the two gloveboxes in the upper fairing and you're ready to go. Power is as smooth and controllable as you'd expect from Honda. The new ST1300 puts its power down so smoothly from any rpm that you can forget about the gear lever most of the time. Out on the open road, there's little need to drop out of fifth gear when you need to slow down some.

Through a series of bends at speed the bike's softish suspension can get the bars—and chassis—wagging a bit. But hey, this ain't no lightweight sportbike, and it's fun riding the ST1300 near its limit anyway. On stock settings, the back end feels a little softer than the front—you've got preload and rebound adjusters at the back—but it isn't bad enough to make you want to bother.

Overall, the new ST1300 isn't a world away from the old one. The differences are all improvements: There's more power, better handling and (taking Honda's word for it) less weight, and the looks have received a cool update, at least in our opinion. There's a bit of VFR in there, but it's less extreme, so it's likely to age better. And that'll be good news for Honda. Just don't expect it to rush out a replacement anytime soon.

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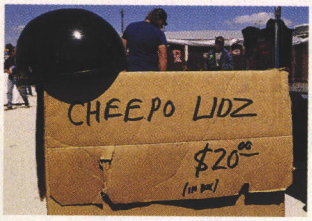


CALIFORNIA GOES LIDLESS (SORT OF)

THIS WILL BE GOOD NEWS FOR ANYONE WITH A "HELMET Laws Suck" sticker on their brain bucket: The California Legislature has amended the state's helmet law to allow riders over the age of 18 years old who carry at least $1 million dollars worth of insurance to not wear a helmet if they choose. The thinking here is the $1 million will be able to pay for the clean-up costs and/or hospital bills when these people get killed or maimed in an accident. As far as motorcycle-insurance policies go, a $1 million policy is about as common as a GSX-R at Sturgis. Progressive Insurance, for example, won't write a policy with that many zeros. Others (such as State Farm) will, though the price is bound to be sky high.

You Shoulda Had a V-Eight!

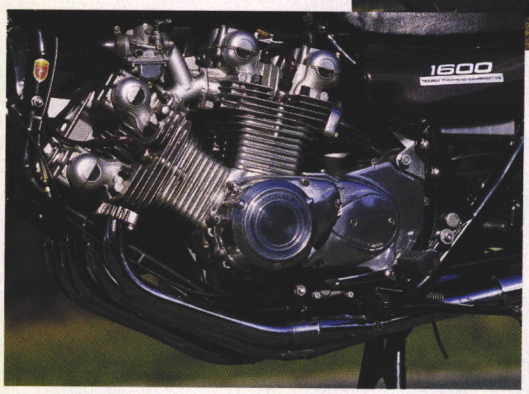
BORN TO BE WILD IS THE SONG YOU'LL be playing in your head when you ogle Allen Millyard's 1600cc V-eight Kawasaki Z1 in an upcoming issue. We've seen the bike and can't get the dang song out of our heads. Imagine . . . a hand-crafted, 1597cc V-eight, created by grafting together two 799cc inline-four motors! Ladies and gentlemen, time for another Wild File.

Most of the bike is comprised of parts from Kawasaki's Z1—the first *real* superbike of the 1970s (and some would say the first real Superbike ever). The handlebar, instruments, fuel tank and other bits are the real deal, but down in the engine room things are highly, ahh, different. Millyard, who works as an engineer at a nuclear research facility just west of London, used the bottom half of a Z1 crankcase, but split the top half into two pieces and rewelded it, with cylinders at a 70-degree angle. Most parts are original Z1, including the cylinder heads and camshafts, though the rear head is reversed and its cams run backward. Pistons are from a KZ650 instead of the Z1, and are 62mm instead of 66mm in diameter. He was forced to use the smaller pistons for technical reasons, resulting in a 799cc per block instead of the Z1's 903cc, for a total capacity of 1597cc.

Millyard was also forced to make a custom frame, which he did by hacking the Z1 frame into four pieces and welding it around the finished V-eight engine. Any other problems? There are too many to list, so join us next month when we go in depth with this bike and give you the low-down on how it feels to pull the trigger on the bike's 130-plus horsepower. Zee fast, eh? —*J.N.*

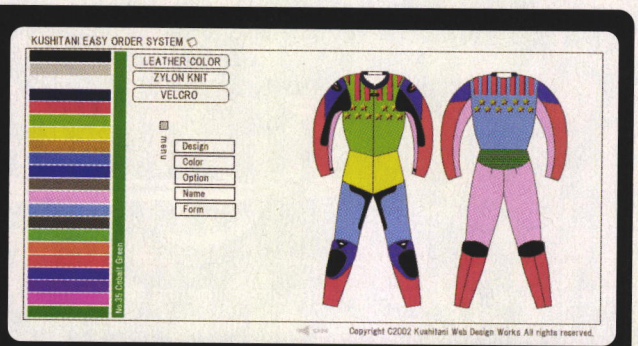
Ouch! Those poor crankcases!

PHIL MASTERS



Make Your Own Leathers!

ARE YOU TIRED OF OFF-THE-RACK DESIGNS FOR ONE-PIECE LEATHER SUITS? Do you think you can do better? Well, here's your chance. Kushitani recently unveiled its "easy-order" system via its Web site (www.kushitani.com) that lets you create custom-designed gloves, boots and one-piece suits. Kushitani joins BKS Leathers (www.bksleather.co.uk) in the interactive leather-design business; both companies use a Macromedia Flash interface that lets you design custom gear on the Web and send it to the company for production. Just click on a color you want, and then click on the section of clothing you want to be that color. (It's so easy staffer Cook got the hang of it after only four tries.)



There are some limitations, however. First, once you're finished with your design you have to print it out and mail it to Kushitani (BKS lets you submit it electronically, and Kushitani is working on this, also). Second, if you add lettering to your suit, there's no way to see how the lettering will look until the suit arrives, and the return policy is simple—no returns. Also, the easy-order system is limited at this time to only one-piece suits, but Kushitani hopes to offer it for its jackets and pants in the future. If you like the design we made, you can easily replicate it by letting a cat or small animal walk on the keyboard for a few minutes. —*J.N.*

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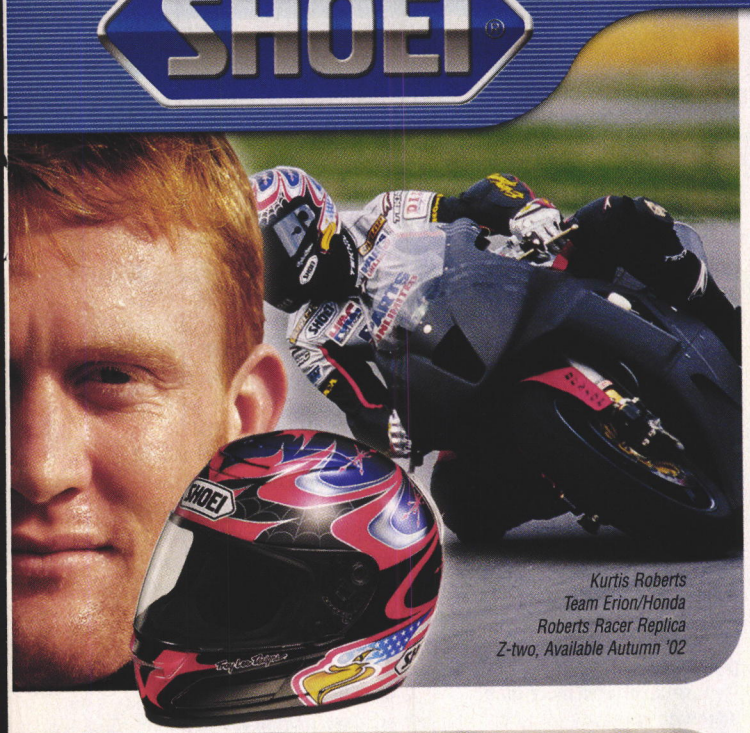
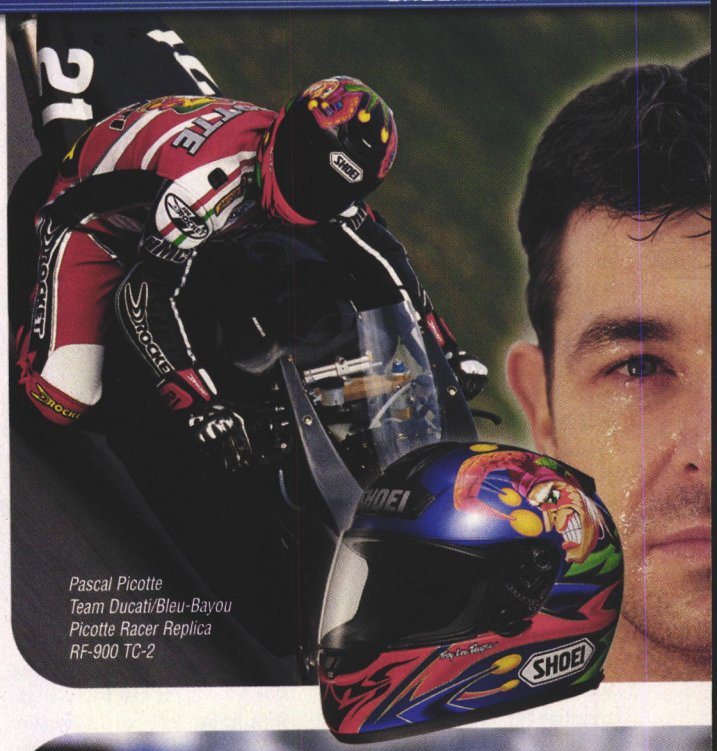
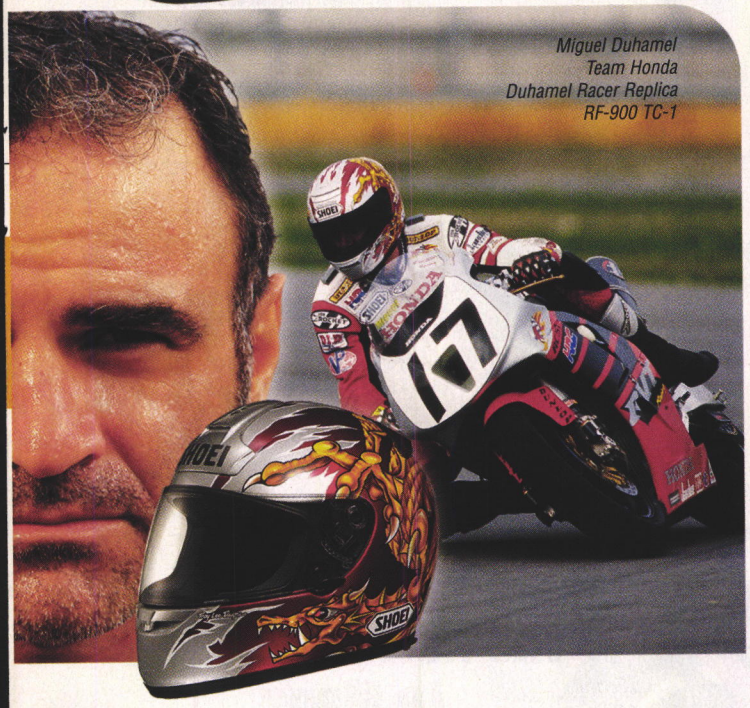


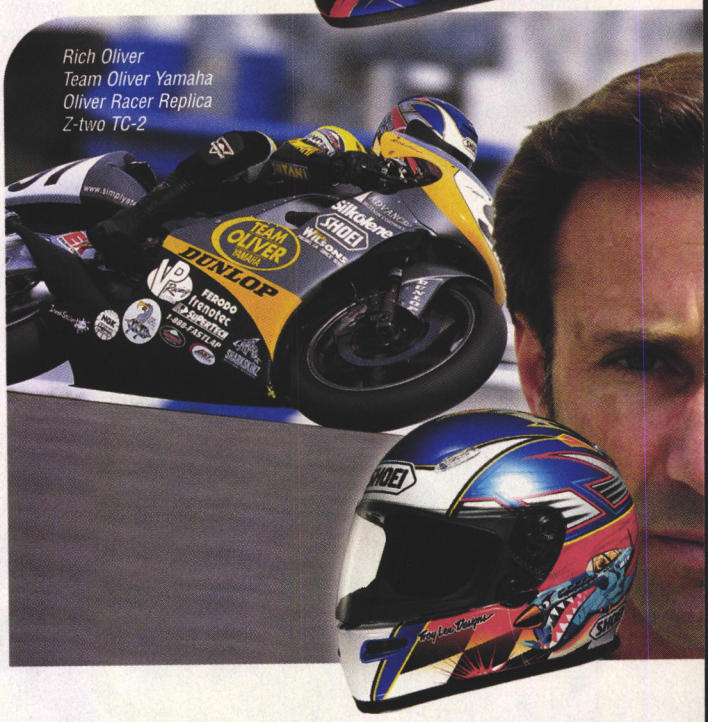
Kurtis Roberts
Team Erion/Honda
Roberts Racer Replica
Z-two, Available Autumn '02



Pascal Picotte
Team Ducati/Bleu-Bayou
Picotte Racer Replica
RF-900 TC-2



Miguel Duhamel
Team Honda
Duhamel Racer Replica
RF-900 TC-1



Rich Oliver
Team Oliver Yamaha
Oliver Racer Replica
Z-two TC-2

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Kawasaki's 636cc ZX-6R

The ZX-6R has always been potent, but the new 636cc version—for Europe only—is more versatile than ever

OLI TENNENT

IT USED TO BE THAT EUROPE GOT ALL the cool motorcycle stuff. That's changed over the years, but maybe not so much. Case in point: Kawasaki's new 636. For 2002, Team Green gave the ZX-6R a 2mm bore job, jacking displacement up to 636cc. Yes, it removes the 636cc model from 600 Supersport racing competition, but that's no big deal to Kawasaki. The number of people who take ZX-6Rs to the track are dwarfed by those who use them for commuting, touring and real-world riding, where Kawasaki says "a slight boost in power and torque would be welcome." We agree.

A slight boost works out to approximately two extra ponies according to Kawasaki, so you know this isn't a completely transformed motorcycle, just a slightly hopped-up one. I rode the new bike in Holland back to back with its 599cc predecessor, and the first sensation? I was riding a Kawasaki ZX-6R. There was plenty of go, but then the old bike had that. You have to really start feeling your way around the rev-counter to notice the difference—but it *is* there.

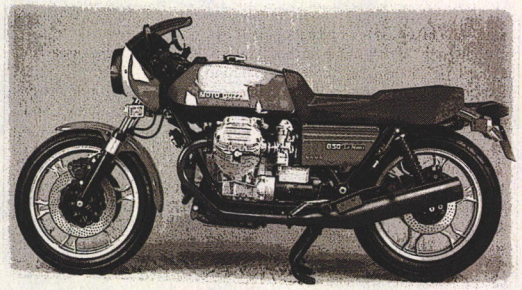
Although it's not quite as cutting-edge as Yamaha's YZF-R6 or Suzuki's GSX-R600, it's still likely to be at the front of a pack of street-going 600s due to its beefed-up midrange. And if you happen to know a road where you can turn the throttle all the way and keep it there for a long time (visit France much?), the ZX-6R will leave not only 600s but also even bigger bikes in its wake. In side-by-side roll-ons, the new bike always wins, no matter what the revs are. The difference is greatest from the lowest speeds, with the larger engine's smoothness probably making more difference than the motor's outright power.

The rest of the package, which features changes like an improved fork and a new front master cylinder, hasn't been unsettled by the changes to the engine. The bike actually feels more balanced than the old one going into corners, and there's more feedback and confidence, too. One thing that is totally unchanged is the braking performance, and the old bike's front setup offered more than adequate power.

With the release of the 636, the ZX-6R is moving toward a more all-'round role. It's not about to turn into a ZX-6 (without the R), and it remains more than capable of holding its own against the other 600s. However, on the road, more than ever it gives you a chance to cover big miles in far more comfort than its race-bred rivals.

The thing is, you already could do that with the existing bike. And the one before that. If you don't want anything bigger than a 600 and need it to do everything—track days, touring and commuting—the ZX-6R is perfect. But that applies to the '99 bike as much as it does to the new one.

—Roland Brown



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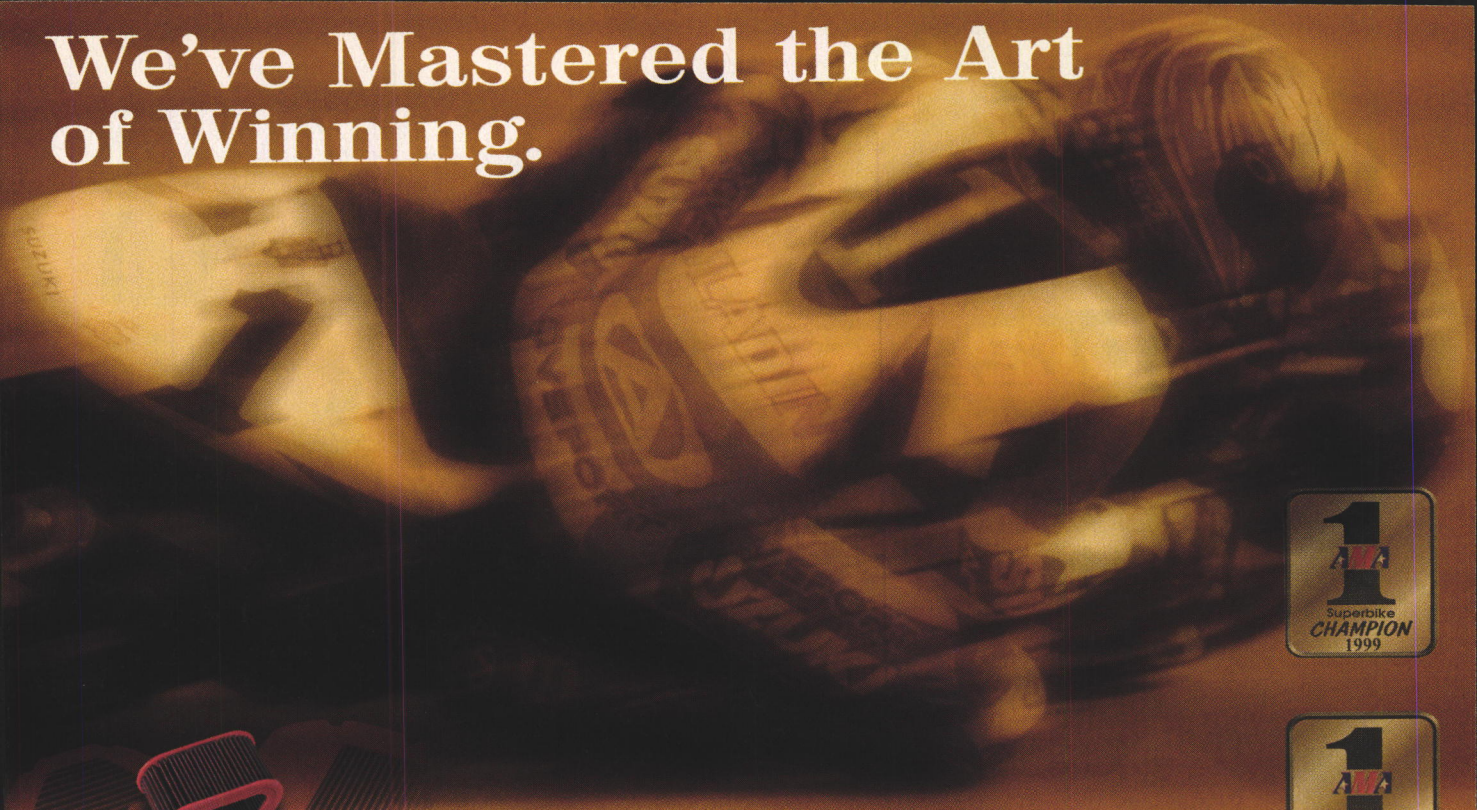

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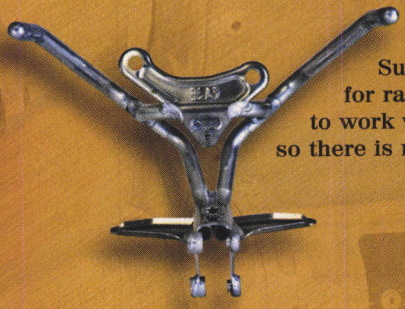

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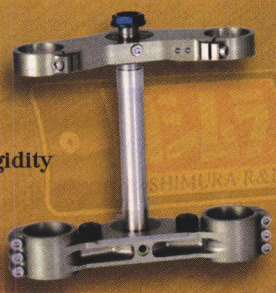

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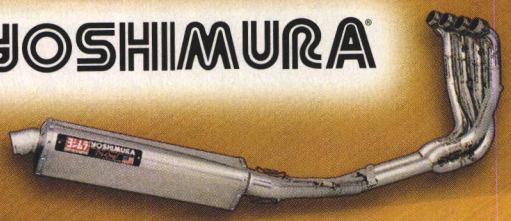

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TEAR-OFFS

■ Ahhh, the rumor mill. This month the hushed whispers came from many sources, all of which are decidedly unverifiable. Still, it's fun to play the guessing game, and this month we heard from several sources about a **possible 1000cc V-twin sportbike being made to compete with Honda's now-benevolent RC51**. Which company is making this RC-killer? Yamaha—and Kawasaki. It probably makes sense for both companies to design an alternative to the flagging YZF-R7 and ZX-7R, because it seems 750cc superbikes are about as fashionable these days as acid-washed jeans. Why don't the companies just focus on their literbikes because the rules will change to allow 1000cc inline-fours to compete in Superbike? We have no idea, as these are just unsubstantiated rumors at this point... **Those clever folks at Arizona's Helmet Harbor have found a way to appease Arai customers who want to buy a helmet over the Internet**, which violates Arai's "no Internet sales" policy. Simply visit the store and get fitted for a helmet. Next, you can return home and proceed to the company's Web site at www.helmetharbor.com to fill out a form saying you've been to the store and were fitted for a helmet. After sending the form back, you are allowed to purchase the helmet you want online. Owner Todd Mittness says a lot of people ride to the store with a helmet, and simply can't buy a new one because they can't carry it home. The shop therefore allows people who have visited to buy the helmet they want, when they want, rather than being forced to buy it on the spot. "We're not looking to break any rules," Mittness said, "we're just trying to make it more convenient for the customer." You can call Helmet Harbor at (480) 635-1009 if you have any questions... **A Massachusetts State Police officer has been put on "judicial notice" by a local judge for giving tickets to motorcyclists.** The policeman stopped John Noble and wrote him citations for improper headgear, heightened noise and altered exhaust, but Noble protested. It turns out this police officer had been giving these types of tickets to motorcyclists for years, but nobody had ever challenged the officer. Noble was found "responsible" for the violations, but on appeal the case went to Judge Bonnie MacLeod, who put the officer "on notice" not to write citations to motorcyclists for helmet or exhaust-pipe violations without "real evidence"... **Tom Sera, founder of Fastrack Riders Association (a Southern California track-day provider) has sold the business** to Larry Pointer and David Pyles. Pointer told *Motorcyclist* he wants to take the club "to the next level" by introducing a racing club with eight race weekends over an eight-month period, with 17 classes. Pointer said he also plans to overhaul the track day's food program (no more spaghetti!) as well as the new rider school. You can check out Fastrack by calling (877) 560-2233 or at www.fastrackriders.com... **Wondering where the new Dunlop D208 Sportmax tires fall into Dunlop's tire hierarchy?** We were, too, so we called Dunlop. Here's the list, from top to bottom: D208 GP, D207RR, D208 (soon to be released), D220. Where's the D207ZR? It's going to be replaced by the D208, which should be available in the fall... **Beach's Motorcycle Adventures has brought some new tour guides aboard for its Alpine tours.** Read all about the staff and the tours at www.beachs-mca.com... **Ford's 2002 SuperCharged Harley-Davidson F-150 SuperCrew truck is coming your way.** Ford will be showcasing the truck at motorcycle events around the country this year, and here's the schedule: Taste of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois, June 29–July 8; Carlisle Summer Bikefest, Carlisle, Pennsylvania, July 26–28; Sturgis Bike Rally, Sturgis, South Dakota, August 5–11; 12th Annual Fun Ford Weekend World Finals, Ennis, Texas, September 20–22; Protection One 400, Kansas City, Kansas, September 28–29; Texas State Fair, Dallas, Texas, September 27–October 20; Biketoberfest, Daytona, Florida, Oct. 17–20; NAPA 500, Atlanta, Georgia, October 25–27; California 500, Fontana, California, November 1–3; Glendale Love Ride, Castaic Lake, California, November 10. MC

"I just don't get it. There goes my neighbor and he started cleaning his bike after I did. He's got a clean bike and I'm not even half finished. What gives?"

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Cruiserphile

Edited By Jamie Elvidge And Art Friedman, *Motorcycle Cruiser* magazine

Jamie and Dan, alligator hunters.

What's It To Ya?

I'VE RIDDEN SOME WEIRD STUFF OVER THE LAST couple weeks. It wasn't all that strange to jump from our long-term Yamaha Royal Star Venture (which I call the Big-Butted Princess with fondness) to the ZX-12R I've been sneaking around on. Then throwing in a handful of muscle cruisers, a few hop-ups and one hot-pink Speed Triple wasn't far off the norm, either. What's made the last month so remarkable was riding the dream machines in between—stuff like Cobra's rocked-out Copper Chopper and Dan Gurney's newly hatched single-cylinder Alligator.

I'm pretty blind when it comes to expectations, especially when they have to do with what makes a motorcycle a motorcycle. To me, what makes a motorcycle is fun. Period. I couldn't really care less what the bag boy at Safeway thinks. Dan Gurney's Alligator is a good case in point. There are a lot of people who just can't handle how different the Alligator concept is. Yes, you sit *in* the bike instead of on it, and, yes, your feet are forward instead of under or behind you. Get over it. The thing's a gas.

If I had to rank the motorcycles I've ridden lately by fun factor alone, I'd say the Alligator was it. But not because it was the quickest or the coolest. The Alligator is respectably fast because it's light and corners with flair thanks to a low CG and endless clearance. It's part sportbike, part cruiser, part Formula 1 car, and that's a pretty in-your-face concept. Best of all, it works. Of course, that's just my opinion. But because I'm the only journalist on the planet to have ridden the latest version, it's probably worth something.

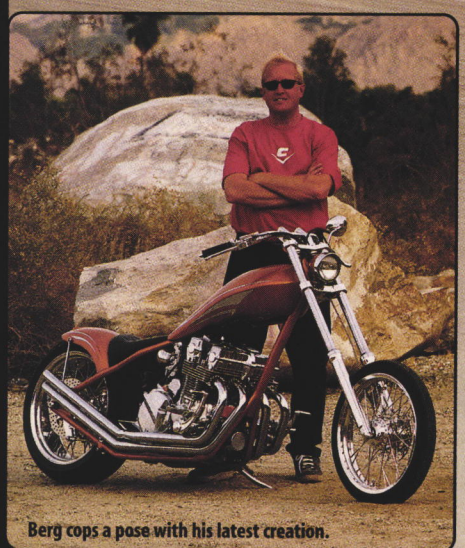
I don't want to merely think outside the box—I want to live out there where ideas are always fresh, the sky is just in reach, and Alligators never bite. Anyone care to join me?

Please direct correspondence to Jamie.Elvidge@primedia.com.

MOTORCYCLE CRUISER

Cobra's Copper Chopper

A ride on the wild side



Berg cops a pose with his latest creation.

CHOPPER-STYLE MOTORCYCLES ARE ONE OF THOSE Americanisms that just keep giving. "Freedom" is the diché component, but choppers also come with imagery of the open road, easy sex, illicit deeds and wandering guys with their armpit hair blowing in the wind. Simpler times, for sure. When Cobra Engineering's Special Projects Division decided to build a 1970s-style chopper around a 750cc Honda Nighthawk engine, it probably wasn't looking for all that. Nope, it was undoubtedly looking for something more complicated—like glory. And, of course, Cobra found it.

Each year Cobra releases a custom or two that blows socks universally. These one-offs, designed and executed by master builder Denny Berg and designer Mike Rinaldi, are usually treated as eye candy and end up on the pedestal circuit. So imagine our surprise when Cobra agreed to let us spend a day riding its latest masterpiece.

While I didn't quite fit the chopper image in my full-face Arai, I had an absolute blast ripping around on

Musclebike Smokeout

SO WHICH OF THE PERFORMANCE CRUISERS DOMINATED OUR MUSCLEBIKE comparison? Why the Yamaha V-Max, of course. Dated but undaunted, the V-four powered mega-cruiser still rips. The remaining chips fell in this order: Honda Valkyrie, Harley-Davidson V-Rod, Honda Magna, Honda VTX-C, Yamaha Warrior and Kawasaki Mean Streak. —J.E.

The motor looks old, but isn't. It's a 2001-spec CB750 Nighthawk engine.

Berg's rendition of a classic chopper. I've ridden quite a few chopped customs and, frankly, all of them handled like crap. This bike is neither sloppy nor heavy feeling, and as easy to get on and ride as any stock cruiser, but way more fun because it makes you feel like such a bad ass. Berg, who's built choppers, café racers, even championship motocrossers, explained building a chopper is a simple recipe, and the key to making one handle so sweetly is a matter of basic geometry. "All you have to do is find the right rake and offset for the triple tree then add the right front tire," he says, "it's nothing magical." The key to making it look so hot is another story.

"If you go back to my doodles of choppers in high school this is exactly what they were: a massive motor with a spindly frame and a big tire on the back." Cobra had originally considered using the mega-horsepower engine out of Honda's CBR1100XX but decided it was just too darn ugly. The Nighthawk's four offered the right balance of aesthetics vs. output. Berg fabricated most of the Copper Chopper himself and only modified the engine slightly because it was already making good power. "We basically popped the motor and electrics and pushed the rest of [the Nighthawk] into the junkyard." He told us he listened to a lot of Led Zeppelin and Pink Floyd during the project, which helped him to generate the correct vibe. We didn't ask about easy sex or any illicit impulses that may have been linked to the project. Like armpit hair, some ingredients of chopperesque are better left unsaid.

For more details on the Copper Chopper and its builder, pick up the August issue of Motorcycle Cruiser. *You can also check out the bike at www.cobrausa.com.* —J.E.

JAMES BROWN

JAMIE ELVIDGE

Big Miles

Aboard Yamaha Royal Star Midnight Venture

WE LIKE OUR PONIES PRETTY, AND A LOOKER that's intended for long, hard rides is twice as nice. The Venture Royal Star has the elegance thing down pat, and the limited-edition Midnight Star version, with its rich ebony paint and shiny gee-gaws, is perfect for someone who wants a slice of custom but doesn't want to bake the cake.

This retro cruiser is comfy, and its built-in amenities, which include cruise control and an AM/FM/CB/cassette unit (we added Yamaha's five-disc CD changer) make even the most mundane interstate miles pleasant. It's powered by a somewhat sedate version of the V-four Yamaha uses in its V-Max, so it's not exactly slow, and we managed to turn a 13.97 second quarter-mile at 93.3 mph on the Venture (once we offloaded the electric grill). Suspension is soft and a bit finicky when the bike's carrying a load; a firmer shock would be one of our first changes, along with adding some real braking power. There's also the issue of that enormous stock windshield, which we would mow down to a reasonable height.

Over the last few years *Motorcycle Cruiser* has put more than 15,000 miles on Royal Star Ventures, and we still come back for more. Of course, at $16,899 Yamaha's Midnight Star is in the league with Honda's Gold Wing ($17,699), which seems kind of like apples to apple pie, even to this cruiser enthusiast. The standard Venture model without the black paint and visual bells and whistles goes for $16,399. —J.E.

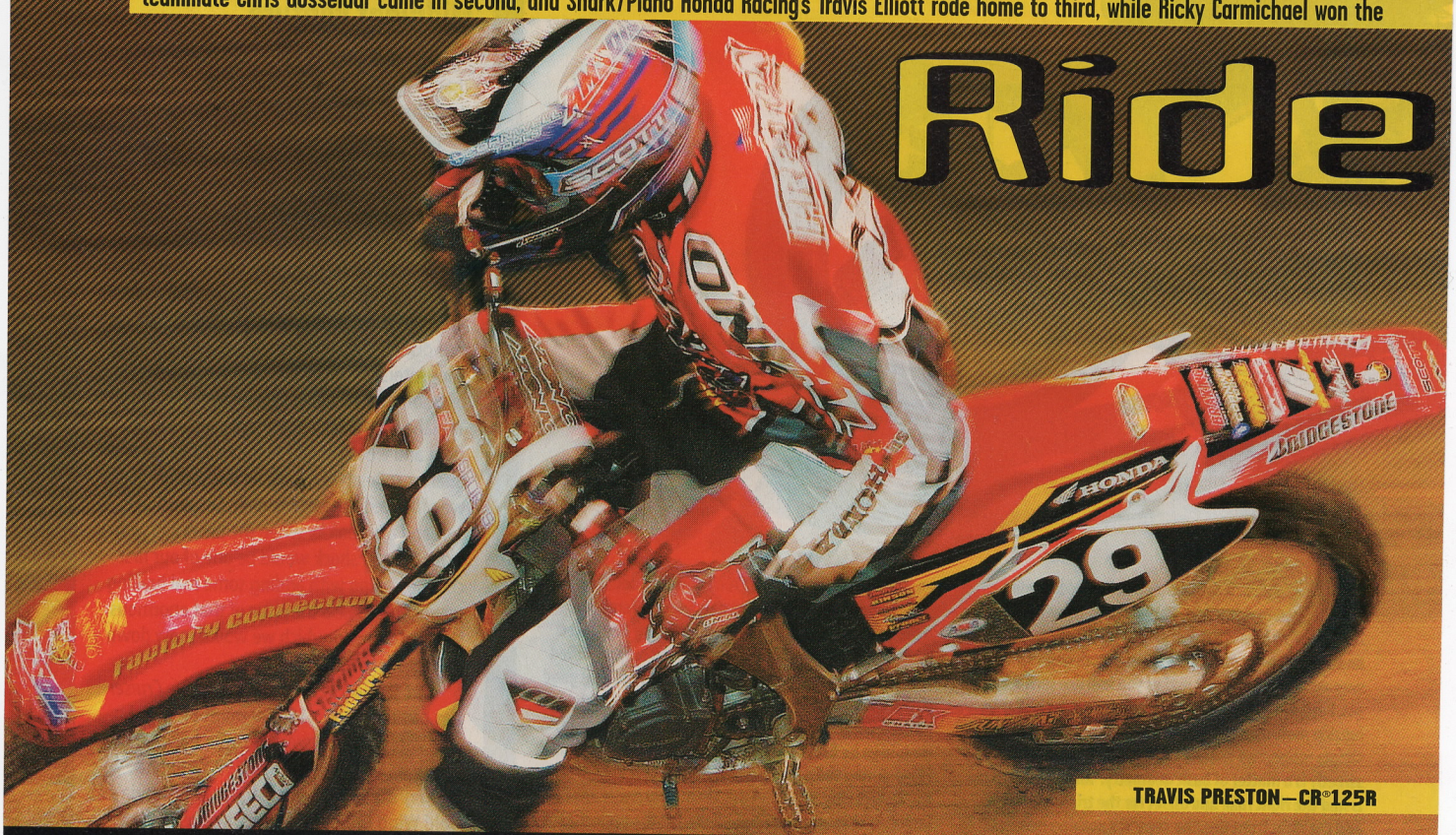
WIN

One weekend, five races, five Honda victories! At Welkom in South Africa, Tohru Ukawa won the 500 MotoGP and Valentino Rossi came in

Edwards and Makato Tamada each won one leg and each scored one second-place in the World Superbike races at Sugo on their Honda RC51s.

teammate Chris Gosselaar came in second, and Shark/Plano Honda Racing's Travis Elliott rode home to third, while Ricky Carmichael won the

Ride



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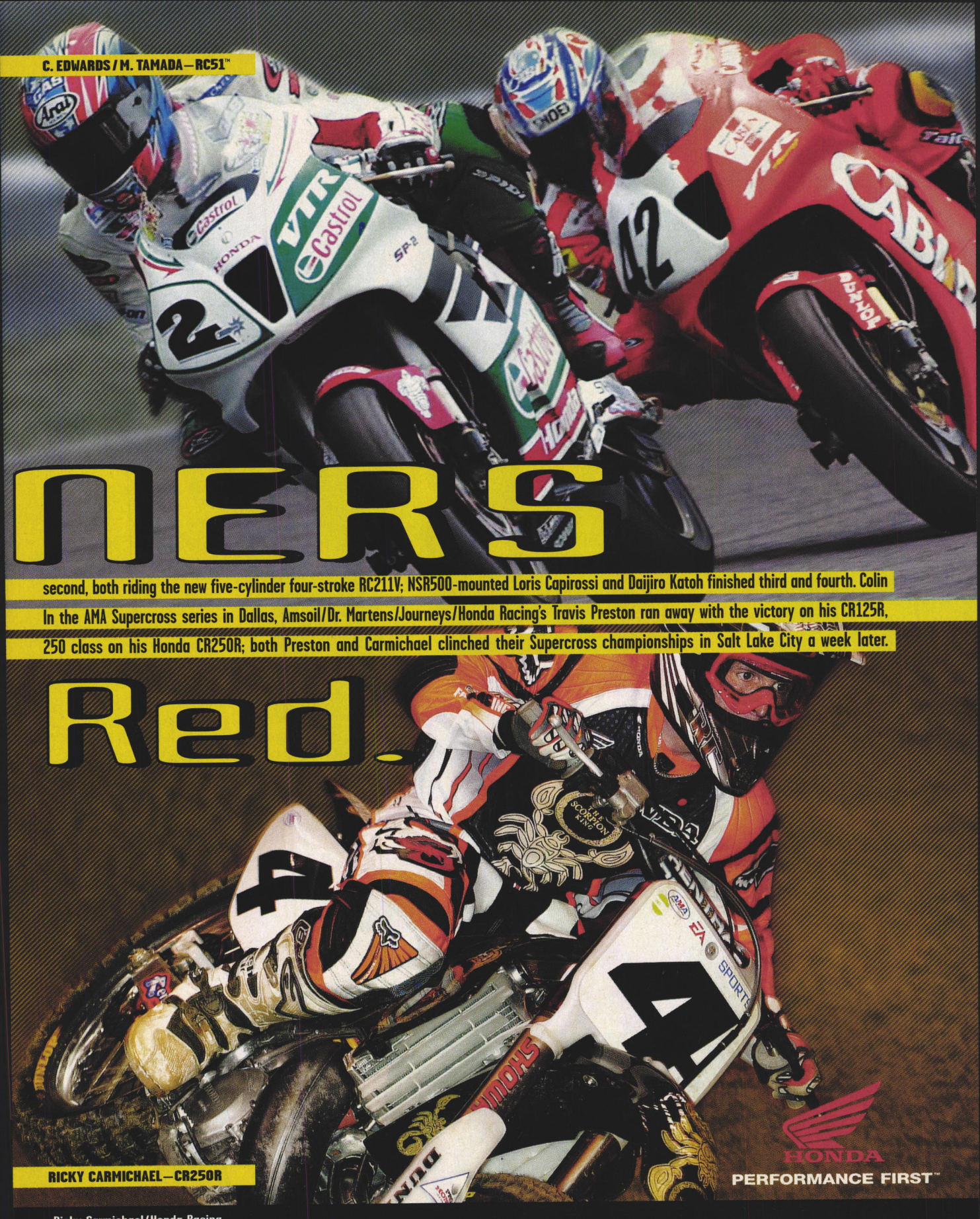
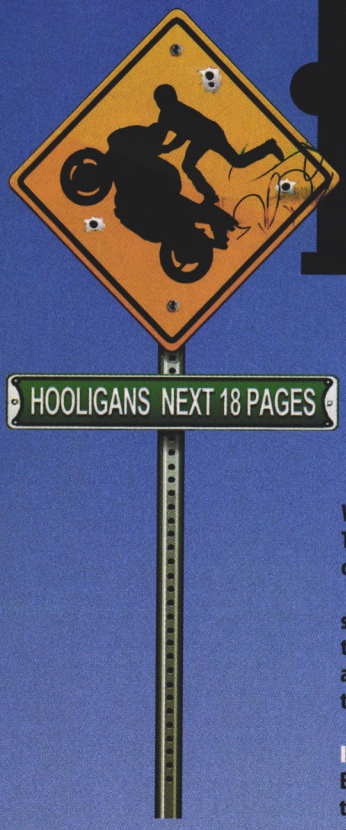


Ricky Carmichael/Honda Racing

www.HondaRedRiders.com Professional riders shown on closed course. ALWAYS WEAR A HELMET, EYE PROTECTION AND PROTECTIVE CLOTHING. NEVER USE THE STREET AS A RACE TRACK, AND PLEASE RESPECT THE ENVIRONMENT. Obey the law and read your owner's manual thoroughly. CR® RC51™ and Performance First™ are trademarks of Honda Motor Co., Ltd. ©2002 American Honda Motor Co., Inc. TM and © Walter Lantz, www.universalstudios.com (5/02)

The HOOLE



WE HOLD THESE TRUTHS TO BE SELF-EVIDENT: THAT ALL MOTORCYCLES, UNDER THE SKIN, ARE CREATED HOOLIGAN. That they are endowed by their riders with certain inalienable rights, among them noise, speed, and the need to loft one's front wheel in defiance of social order, The Man and the relentless force of gravity.

The term "hooligan," according to legend, arose in the late 1890s, when a group of cranky young men, calling themselves the "Hooley Gang," terrorized London. "Hooley Gang" quickly turned into "Hooligan"—and here we are. Those turn-of-the-century headbusters roamed London on foot, but if they were around today it's not hard to imagine them astride slighty scruffy Triumphs, roaring around Trafalgar Square, scattering humans and pigeons alike. (Actually, they're called "motorcycle couriers.")

IN THE CLEARING STAND HIS BOXERS

But there are hooligans, of course, and there are *Hooligans*. In the motorcycle world, the term is roughly applied to powerful, upright machines with a minimum of fairing plastic, chrome and other nonessential doodads. Bikes made for the short haul, with at least a couple wheelies thrown into each of those hauls. Bikes with the engine and chassis of a sportbike, but with the guts hanging out there in the world, kind of like hanging one's boxers out above one's jeans. Marky Mark, meet the Hooley Gang.

Wheelies are fun. These suckers wheelie. What could be better?

By Dexter Ford. Photos By Kevin Wing

Ey IGAnG

EVOLUTION BY ABRASION

The birth of the Hooligan class is fairly awash with irony, it is. In the mid-'80s, when the Japanese started covering up their GSX-Rs, CBRs and Ninjas with plastic, they said they were doing it partly to save money—if you cover an engine and other squidgy bits, you don't have to art-direct the bits.

So thousands of young guys ran out and bought these plastic jellybeans. And inevitably hammered them into the ground, being young guys and all. The plastic was expensive—so they rode around without. And slowly realized they actually liked the pierced-tongue, spike-haired look of the grotty bits the designers tried so hard to hide. They learned you can't scratch plastic that isn't there. That in town, where you tend to hang, you want high, wide bars, not racing clip-ons. That with high bars, these things really like to wheelie. And that wheelies are fun. Bang, screech and roar, a new class of motorcycle was born.

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VALENTINO ROSSI.

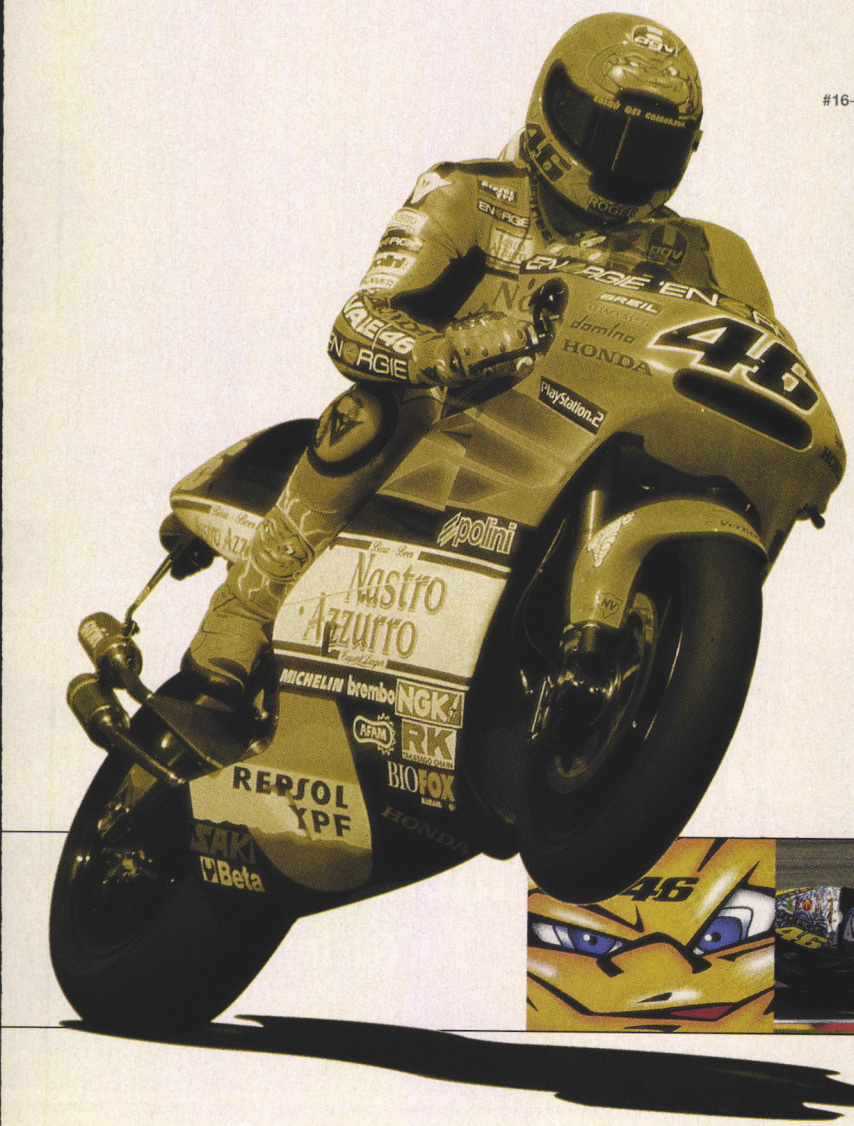
36 REASONS WHY I WON THE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP:

X-VENT
ROSSI MUGELLO

#1–I have the best "structure"
#2–I trained in "Pano" with ALBI
#3–Jeremy and the other guys got drunk after 6 p.m.
#4–I couldn't walk in the Pepe Nero otherwise
#5–I worked out a lot at the gym
#6–The Tribe is The Tribe
#7–Max always brought me coffee
#8–I've had dinner at Piwi's, and sometimes at Pedro's
#9–I don't have a girlfriend
#10–The "celul-harem" needs strong emotions

#11–I have the coolest helmet in the world

#12–Guido rides the motorcycle with me
#13–I have seen Martin Scorsese's "Good Fellas"
#14–My motorcycle is loaded with electronic stuff
#15–I have learned to be a phenomenon
#16–The night before each race I never go to bed before 2 a.m.
#17–Riccardo helped me
#18–Mick is with me in the pits
#19–I go to the Clinica Mobile
#20–Uccio would have beaten me up if I didn't
#21–I did not lose calm in Brno
#22–Luckily I don't live in Auditore
#23–I am a good guy, healthy and with good principles
#24–I am well organized
#25–Honda ran faster than any other bike
#26–It's the last 500cc World Championship
#27–It's written in my contract
#28–I want to marry Angelina Jolie or Ana Kournikova
#29–my fan club followed me everywhere
#30–I fishtail
#31–I trained at the mine
#32–Andrea is my friend
#33–San Remo is San Remo
#34–I respect the Cabala
#35–I forgot to win last year
#36–Finally, my dad will cut his ponytail



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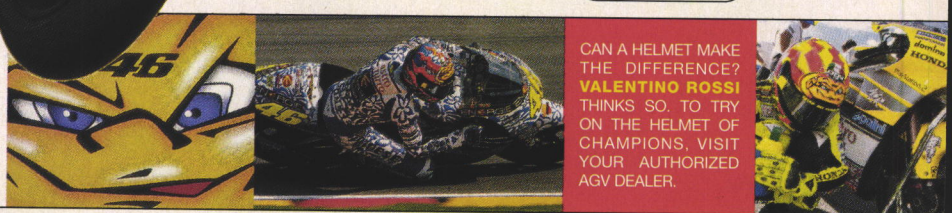

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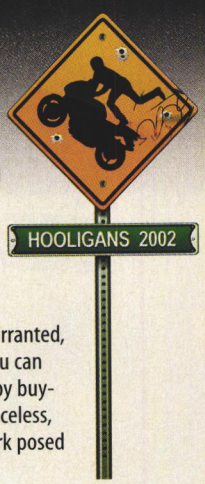

Grittier and more elemental than the chrome-encrusted old standards, not so nostalgic as the new standards, with all (OK, most) of the power and edge of racing bikes but without the Day-Glo graphics and hurts-so-good racing crouch.

RUGGED INDIVIDUALISM! BE THE FIRST ON YOUR BLOCK!

So you can now go out and select your brand-new, warranted, smog-legal Hooligan. Which presents another irony: You can rebel from the faceless, multinational corporate world by buying an officially rebellious motorcycle from that same faceless, multinational corporate world. Oh, well. Even Marky Mark posed for underwear ads.

HOOLIGANO? HOOLI-GAMI? BUELL-IGAN? DAMEN ÜND HERRIGEN?

Just as the Hooligan class is a little elusive to define, it also has its share of national, and corporate, variation.

The Speed Triple has the impromptu styling, along with the liter-bike power and solid chassis, which makes for serious, up-yours fun. But Honda, being Honda, couldn't resist polishing the rough edges off the comparable 919; you find yourself wanting to muss up its hair before you take it outside.

The Ducati Monster, in S4 trim, is easily monstrous enough, but today we're riding the worthy, but not-quite-menacing 620i.e. The sportbike chassis is there, but with only 55 horsepower the 620i.e. will be entered on the roster as a sort of Hooligan Lite. Or, perhaps, a good bike for bad girls. Would that be a Her-Igan? She-Nanigan?

The Suzuki SV650 is unassuming, beautifully finished and easy to ride, which is just about everything this class is not. But it's also a great, fast, good-clean-fun motorcycle. So sneak it into the nicest-people corner of the category, if only to contrast the rough-trade rowdies. The German speakers, MuZ and KTM, have their own dirty thoughts. The

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RSVmilleR
twin cylinder V60° - 998cc - dry weight 411 lbs
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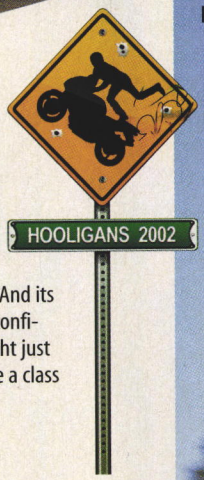
Aprilia USA cares about your safety. Always wear a helmet, eye protection and protective clothing. Never ride under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Follow the maintenance schedule in your owner's manual and inspect your Aprilia motorcycle before every ride.

MuZ Baghira

Buell XB9R Firebolt



KTM Duke

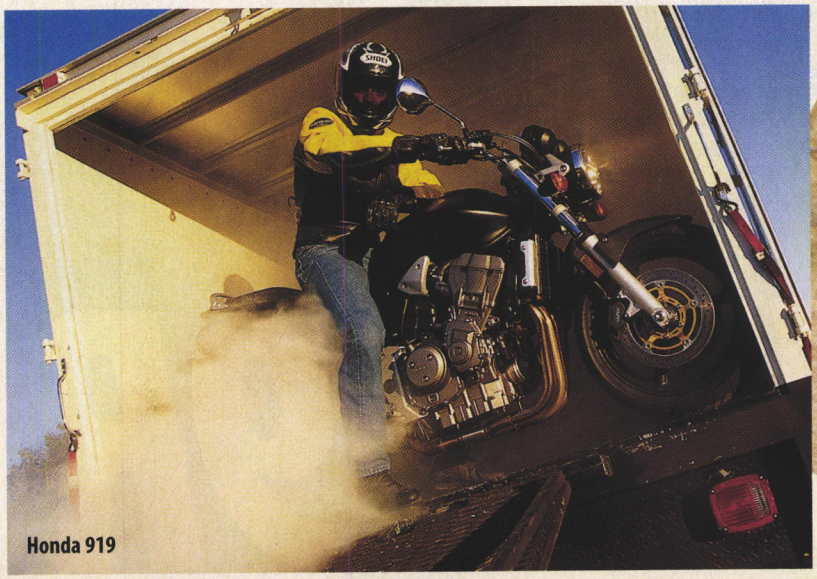
Baghira and Duke started, not as sportbikes, but as big-thump off-roaders. Choose the filth-under-the-fingernails MuZ or the Motocrosser-from-Mars KTM—and have a foot near the rear brake when the front wheel lifts off.

With its Son-of-Sportster engine, the Buell Firebolt brings along more than its share of pre-Hooligan heritage. And its short, street-fighter chassis surely exudes cockiness, if not confidence. If the Firebolt has a weakness, Hooligan-wise, it might just be in its modern-as-tomorrow, high-tech look. Can there be a class in which a Buell is too sophisticated?

Now *that's* irony.

A HUGE MESS

Whether you slowly mill your own Hooligan in the gem-tumbler that is the street, or simply buy it off the rack, it's really the spirit that counts. A spirit we've come here to examine, enjoy and celebrate. Because, at its heart, it's the same *yee-ha* attitude that got most of us onto motorcycles in the first place. And whether you're doing your piercing in your soft body parts, or on the ends of Cuban cigars, these things are, above all, just a huge mess of fun.


Honda 919

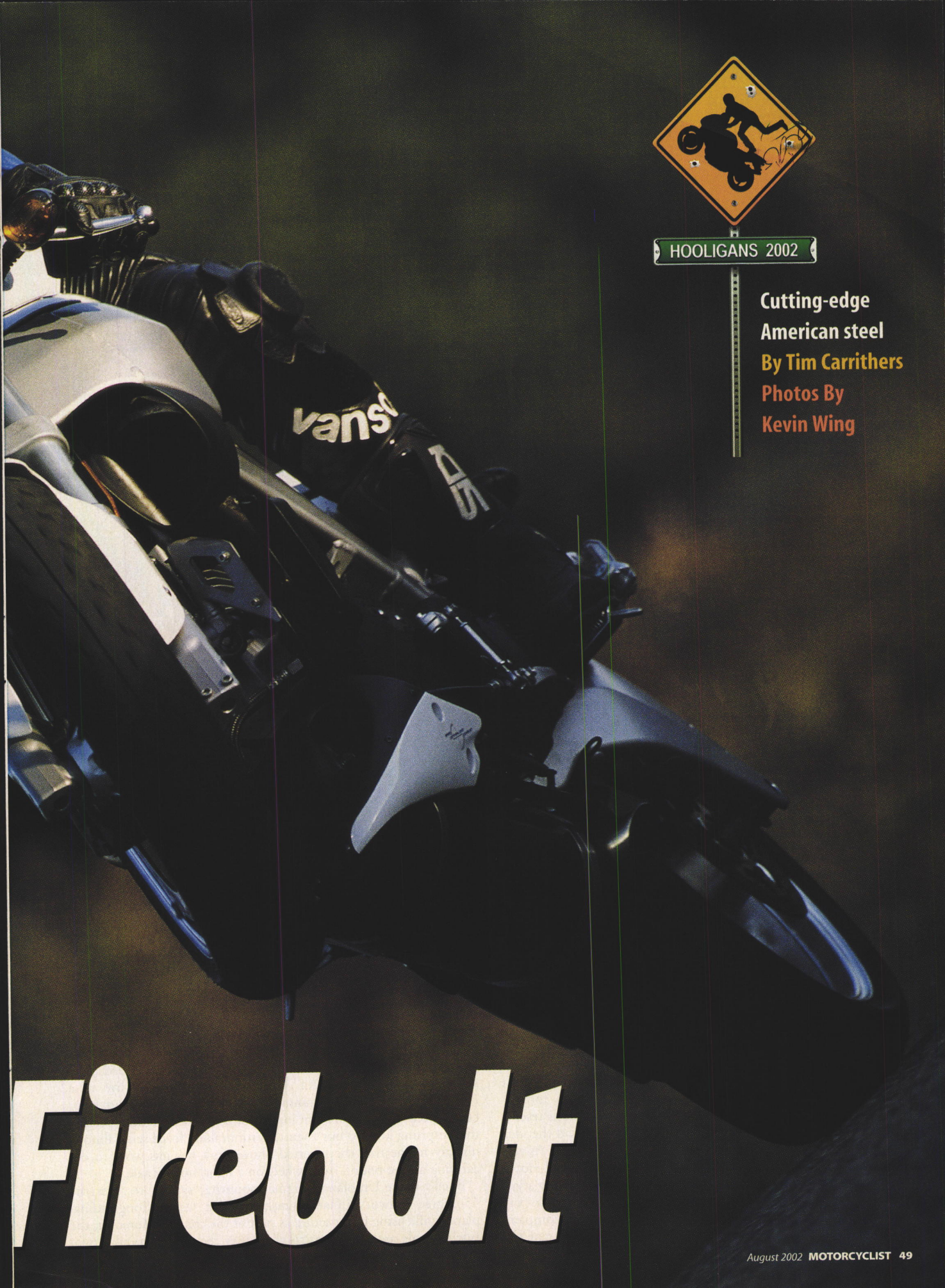
Triumph Speed Triple

WE ASK THAT YOU SURRENDER ALL BIASES, predilections, prejudices and predictions at this time. All will be safely returned to you unharmed at the conclusion of this test. From here on, clear your mind and realize no matter what you think of Erik Buell's 2003 Firebolt now, it will surprise you. America's only sportbike maker has never taken the conformist approach to motorcycle design. Having gone that far, the Firebolt is a radical departure, even for Buell.

ROAD TEST

It would be a singular piece compared with any other motorcycle…if there were any other motorcycle to compare it with. Those of you paying attention should be dialed in on all the Buell bright-think expressed throughout the XB9R Firebolt. Our October Firebolt preview covered all

Buell XB9R



Firebolt

Cutting-edge American steel

By Tim Carrithers

Photos By Kevin Wing

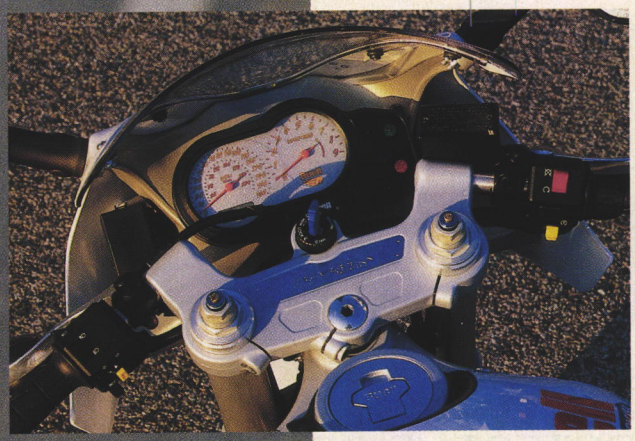
It would be a singular piece compared with any other motorcycle... if there were any other motorcycle to compare it with.

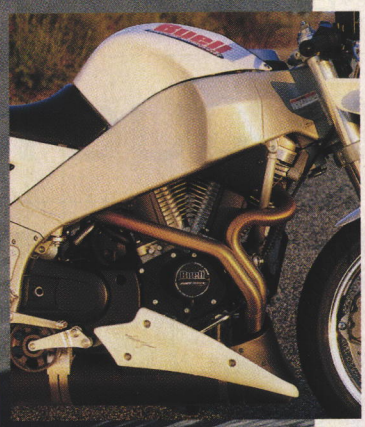
the mechanical minutia, and our February '02 cover story went for a quick scrape around Las Vegas Motor Speedway's small track on the little brute. For everyone else, we'll hit the high spots again.

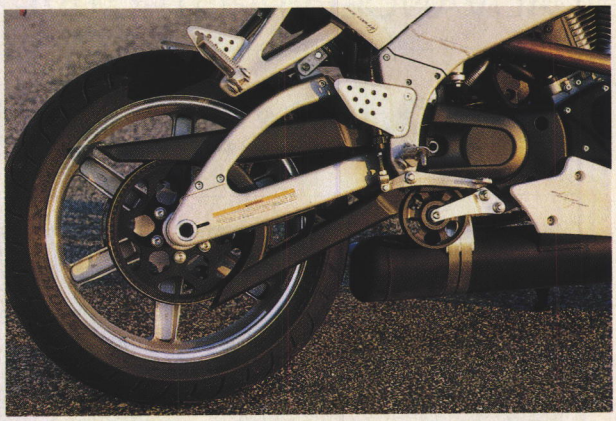
The Firebolt isn't a conventional sportbike. It isn't a racer replica. It isn't an anything replica. Buell calls the Firebolt a "sport fighter"—a fuel-injected 45-degree Milwaukee V-twin torque-pump, artfully shoehorned into a chassis with dimensions resembling a 250cc racebike's. Wrap your frontal lobes around the idea of 21 degrees of fork angle buffered by just 84mm of trail. As you might expect, persuading the latest 984cc Sportster-derived motor into a chassis with axles just 52 inches apart took some very atypical design thinking. To make those numbers and that engine play nice together, Lead Chassis Engineer Vance Strader and company pushed all the bike's heavy bits down toward the center of the motorcycle. The resulting architecture gives major Firebolt chassis components more than one job to do.

Cast for Buell by Verlicchi, that aluminum-spar frame is also the gas tank, carrying 3.7 gallons (not much, really) of unleaded in its specially sealed interior. All 3.5 quarts of engine oil live in a Brembo-cast one-piece aluminum swingarm. A single 375mm rotor bolts directly to the front rim instead of the hub. Weight, especially the unsprung kind, is our enemy. With braking loads sent (almost) directly to the tire, the inverted Showa fork has less work to do, carrying a nine-pound front wheel on a light, hollow axle.

Buell's latest Uniplanar engine-mounting system restricts the 45-degree V-twin's innate thrashing to a vertical/longitudinal plane while using its structure as part of the chassis. Moreover, the Buell people are specific as to what they feel this particular twin







Top, left: Forward bar placement makes more room in the cockpit, but cuts leverage and increases steering effort. Sensitive orbs found the instruments more stylish than clear. Fuse boxes flanking the instrument pod are easily accessible, as are other maintenance areas. Top, right: The Showa fork does a great job. The Firebolt-specific front Dunlop wants 36 psi, no less. Flexy calipers rob the trick front brake of feel under combat conditions. Above, left: Hydraulic lifters make the 984cc 'Bolt mill a low-maintenance piece. Ours was stone reliable. Above, right: That crafty pulley under the footpeg keeps the drive belt tight. That means zero slop in the driveline and no adjustments.

isn't. It shares only 88.9mm x 79.4mm cylinder dimensions and pushrod covers with the Buell's single-cylinder beginner bike, so don't call it a double-barrel Blast!. Various strands of design DNA come from Harley-Davidson's XL family, but it's not really a Sportster engine, either. The transmission, primary drive and clutch come from existing Buell parts bins. From there the engine team mixed and matched, making the most of Harley manufacturing capabilities to keep the price out of Ducati 998 territory. Still, everything from the pistons and connecting rods to the crankcases and valves are Firebolt-specific. Higher-flow cylinder heads are new, and NASCAR-inspired valve-train trickery fends off float up to the 7500-rpm redline. The motor weighs in at 169 pounds dry,

The AirFlow concept. The key to the AirFlow Concept is AirTex® – air-permeable panels which provide venting and comfort, even on days that would make Dante cringe.

Yes, it really comes from technology developed by earthlings. Nope, AirTex didn't accidentally land on earth having survived intergalactic travel (though sometimes we wonder). It was developed after years of research, with one goal in mind: provide comfort without sacrificing protection. Composed of Kevlar®-reinforced Dynafil® thread, AirTex is processed much like a net, resulting in an extremely durable mesh. Cooling air is allowed in, then vented out. Pants also have a mesh placement above the knee, helping prevent the uncomfortable and embarrassing condition also known as "sweaty rear."

INTRODUCING
ADVANCED PROTECTIVE GEAR

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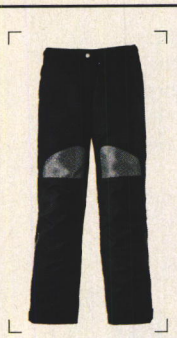

OK, it's comfortable. Is it gonna shred like an old T-shirt? The AirFlow suit, as well as all of our Advanced Protective Gear, is thoroughly evaluated to pass the highest standards. Ours. For instance, materials are tested to ensure a melting point of at least 410°F, so an extended slide over surfaces such as asphalt won't cause material to melt against the rider's skin. Additional features also include double stitching on seams with Serafil® thread, and removable CE protectors located in the shoulders, elbows and knees. And don't worry guys, we're not neglecting you. The AirFlow suit also comes in men's sizes, and in more "manly" colors, like blue and grey.

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LET IT GO TO YOUR HEAD.

Morris Says...

Computrack L.A.'s Morris Ellis puts our XB9R test bike under the scope

Ellis found the Firebolt's actual geometry numbers very radical—more so than a 250cc racer's.

MARC COOK

PERUSE THE SPEC PAGE, RIDE THE bike and you're left wondering: Did the Buell folks go too far in trying to make a radical, quick-steering motorcycle out of the Firebolt? And what of those amazing chassis-geometry claims? Real or just imagined by some marketing type in Milwaukee?

We trotted our early production XB9R Firebolt over to Computrack L.A. and had owner Morris Ellis check the numbers. What he computed turns out to be quite eye-opening, and provides a few clues to the quirky handling of the Firebolt. But before that, understand that Computrack's measurements, particularly of rake and trail, often contradict the manufacturer's claims. Usually, this is because the OEMs measure these items with the suspension partially compressed—Computrack takes them with the wheels off the ground—but there are also changes that take place between development and production as well as variances introduced with different tires. So, your mileage may vary.

Now the juicy stuff. Ellis found the Firebolt's rake to be 21.1 degrees and front-wheel trail to be 87.2mm—actually fairly close to what Buell claims. The calculated wheelbase is 1321mm, right on Buell's stated 52 inches. Some perspective is necessary here. An out-of-the-crate Yamaha TZ250, one of the tiniest, most radical motorcycles out there, tapes out at 22.8 degrees/88.0mm, with a 1351mm wheelbase. Hmmm. How about a YZF-R6, then? Computrack figures it at 25.5 degrees/100.8mm on a 1400mm wheelbase. Very interesting.

What these numbers suggest is that the Firebolt, weighing easily 150 pounds more than a soaking-wet TZ, has even more radical geometry. "And," Ellis says, "that's a stock TZ. We find that the fastest racers actually tweak the TZ to have more conservative geometry."

There are yet more clues. One critical element of chassis geometry is the rear-axle/swingarm relationship, both in distance and in "down angle" from the pivot to the axle. Here the Firebolt continues to buck the status quo. It's got a 13.9-degree down angle, which is much more than even race-tuned bikes use, and it's coupled with a short swingarm. The Firebolt's measures just 466mm; compare this with the YZF-R6's 570mm, or TZ's 595mm.

"I'm really surprised to see this kind of geometry on a stock street-bike," Ellis told us, "and I predict the bike will be difficult to set up for the average rider." What would he do? "First I'd get to work juggling ride heights front and rear with the main goal of making those rake and trail figures more conservative. I might also experiment with different tires—there may be a combination of size and profile that works best on the bike. From there, I'd be looking at spring and damping rates with an eye toward keeping the chassis as pitch-stable as possible. With this kind of geometry, you'd really want to keep the chassis attitude under control."

Sounds like a project to us.

—Marc Cook

complete with oil coolers and attendant mounting hardware—41 pounds lighter than the 1200 Sportster mill, but still 46 pounds up on KTM's new superlight V-twin.

Hop on and you're aboard an exceedingly compact motorcycle. Everything looks cleanly styled and nicely bolted together from the saddle. Instrumentation—featuring an LCD clock, two trip meters and mileage on reserve—is complete and well placed, though the speedo is the quaint analog type, and some found the numbers hard to read. Keeping heavy bits low on the chassis makes the Firebolt feel lighter than its 455-pound wet weight would suggest. Ergos are a mixed bag; clip-ons are a comfortable reach from the seat, but the foot pegs are high enough to require yoga classes.

Fuel injection takes all the spit/stumble/pop out of the mix during startup, but the ensuing mechanical commotion is pure Sportster: Whether that's cool or archaic is in the ear of the beholder. Having warmed up to forward motion, the Firebolt is perfectly cooperative around town. The 45-degree twin's endemic flailing behavior remains at idle, but the engine mounts smooth things out from 3000 rpm on up, though somewhat more vibration gets through than on previous Buell systems. Clutch pull is on the heavy side, but the revamped linkage allows smooth shifting as long as you take your time. Power builds adequately from idle, though basement-level grunt is less impressive than, say, a Honda VTR1000's. That cute little idler pulley keeps the driveline lashfree. It also maintains drive-belt tension so you don't have to. In fact, a fixed rear-axle position means you can't.

Slow-speed steering is maybe a touch heavier than chassis numbers would suggest. Still, the Firebolt is a nimble, serviceable urban tool. Showa suspension bits deliver a taut

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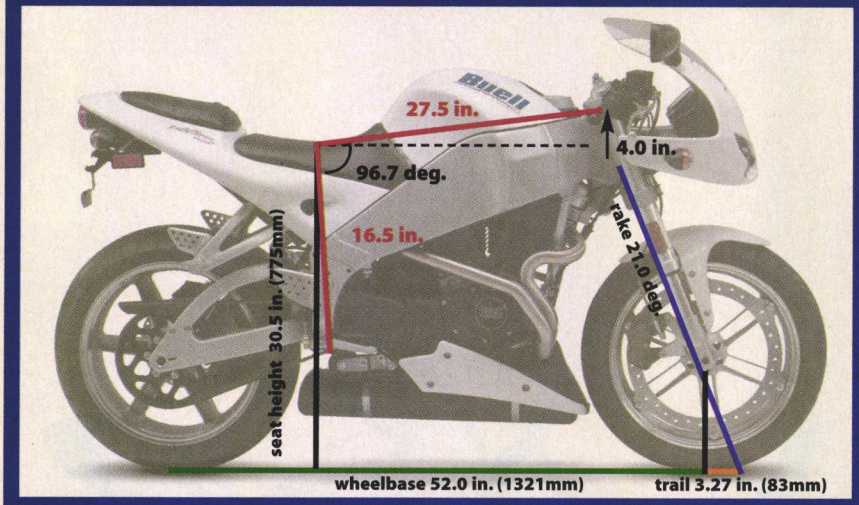
Buell XB9R Firebolt



MSRP $9995
Warranty ..... 12 months, unlimited miles
Colors ..... white, blue

ENGINE

Type ..... a-c 45-deg. V-twin
Valve arrangement .. ohv, 4v
Bore x stroke ..... 88.9 x 79.4mm
Displacement 984cc
Compression ratio ... 10.0:1
Carburetion ..... VDO electronic fuel injection, 45mm throttle body

details, details...

- The fit and finish are superb
- Nothing broke, burned or fell off...and that's saying something
- Shock access is fine, once you've removed the seat
- Minimal maintenance requirements

Transmission 5-speed
Final drive ..... belt

CHASSIS

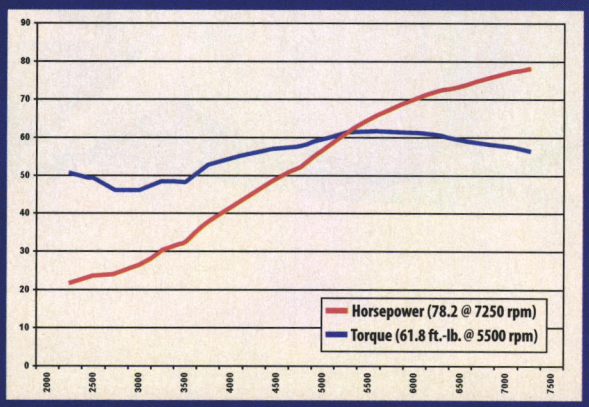
Frame ..... aluminum alloy twin spar
Weight ..... 455 lb. (wet)
433 lb. (fuel tank empty)
Fuel capacity ..... 3.7 gal.

Suspension, front ... 43mm inverted cartridge fork adjustable for spring preload, compression and rebound damping
Suspension, rear .... single shock adjustable for spring preload, compression and rebound damping
Brake, front ..... single six-piston caliper, 375mm discs
Brake, rear ..... single one-piston caliper, 230mm disc
Tire, front ..... 120/70ZR17 Dunlop D207ZR
Tire, rear ..... 180/55ZR17 Dunlop D207ZR

PERFORMANCE

Corrected 1/4-mile* 11.71 sec. @ 113.74 mph
0–60 mph* ..... N/A
0–100 mph* ..... N/A
Top-gear roll-on, 60–80 mph* ..... 4.73 sec.

Correction factors (time/speed)* 0.9571/1.0455
Power to weight ratio** ..... 7.99 lb/hp
Fuel mileage (low/high/average) 37/43/41
Cruising range (exc. reserve) ..... 121 miles



dyno chat

- Compared with previous, high-output Buells, the Firebolt's torque curve is flat and nearly featureless, which is a good thing. It would be nice if this injected, breathed-on sporty engine could out-chug, say, a 10-year-old, badly maintained 600 Supersport's.

*Performance with test-session weather conditions corrected to sea-level standard conditions (59 degrees F, 29.92 in. of mercury)

**Wet weight plus 170 lb. rider divided by measured horsepower

Cheers & Jeers

BUELL XB9R FIREBOLT

Engine	7	*Willing, but not strong enough*
Drivetrain	8	*Much-improved 'box, durable drive belt*
Handling	8	*Sweet if you ride by Buell rules*
Braking	7	*Numb feel under combat conditions*
Ride	9	*Taut, yet never punishing*
Ergonomics	7	*Cruelly short seat-to-peg*
Features	8	*The American engineering tour de force*
Refinement	8	*Tidily assembled; engine is still an axe*
Value	8	*Great if unique is what you seek*
Fun Factor	7	*The ultimate eccentric amusement*

verdict: *Erik Buell's great white (or blue) hope thrusts sportbike orthodoxy under the wheels of the bus. Is Buell's promise of a sharp-handling tool fulfilled? Not exactly.*

ride without loosening one's dental work over potholes. Another plus: The underslung 11-liter muffler is quiet enough to sneak out of the condo complex at 5:55 A.M. with no nasty letters from the homeowner's association. The intermittent blow-dryer whir of the rear cylinder's cooling fan isn't something you expect from the engine bay of a Milwaukee twin, but it does help avert the heat-induced pinging of previous models. The problem is, it tends to run once you've parked, which is embarrassing at the Sunday-morning hangout.

Wound up to freeway speed, top gear (fifth) turns 4500 rpm into a placid 75 mph. The string-bikini fairing provides decent protection for its size. Limp seat foam and scarce legroom will squelch most interstate-touring aspirations after 90 minutes, which is approximately when the low-fuel light wakes up anyway. Expect about 150 miles between fillups if you're relatively easy on the throttle.

Going easy on the throttle becomes increasingly unlikely once the pavement gets a few kinks in it. The power curve is relatively linear, showing none of the dips and chasms blighting Buell's higher-performance-spec engines. Extra tractability comes at the expense of peak power. The massaged 1200 Sportster mill in Buell's S3 Thunderbolt made 90.1 ponies at 6500 rpm vs. the Firebolt's 78.2-horse peak at 7250 rpm. Put to work pushing a 455-pound motorcycle, Firebolt horses have a lot of work to do. They're most enthusiastic between 5000 and the 7500-rpm redline, and as long as you're not riding in faster company they provide a tasty little rush between corners. For those who *must* consider the Big Picture, 78.0 horsepower from 984cc does beat Ducati's 77.5-horsepower 900 Supersport (barely), but it's nothing special on streets full of 100-horse TLs, VTRs and even GSX-R600s.

OK, so 90 or 95 horsepower *would* make the Firebolt more fun to ride and make it a more viable mainstream contender. For now, the chassis plays the starring role. On

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(15 Jacket Winners)

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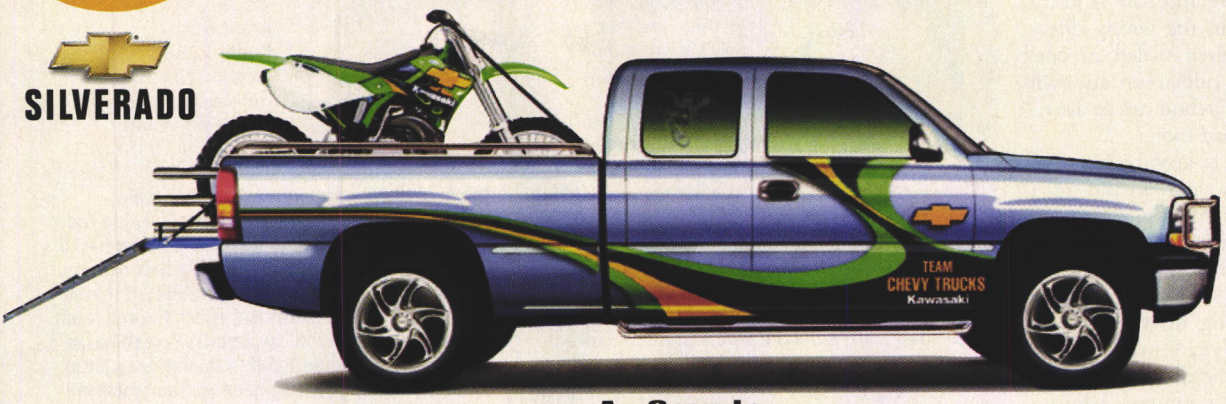
SILVERADO



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2002 Silverado Race Truck GiveawayOfficial Rules 1. NO PURCHASE, ONLINE ENTRY, OR PAYMENT OF ANY KIND IS NECESSARY TO ENTER OR WIN. A PURCHASE WILL NOT IMPROVE YOUR CHANCES OF WINNING. VOID WHERE PROHIBITED. 2. Eligibility: Sweepstakes open only to legal residents of the 50 United States and the District of Columbia, who are 18 years of age or older as of 5/10/02, and who possess a valid driver's license. Employees of Sponsor and Administrator, their respective parents, subsidiaries, affiliated companies, divisions, dealers, and advertising and promotion agencies and the immediate family (defined as parents, spouse, children, siblings, grandparents) of each such employees, and all those with whom such employees are domiciled, are NOT eligible to enter sweepstakes. **3. Timing:** Sweepstakes begins at 12:01 a.m. Pacific Time (PT) on 5/10/02 and ends, at 11:59 p.m. (PT) on 10/31/02. To be included in all FIRST-PRIZE random drawings subsequent to an AMA Motocross series race: a) On race day (starting with the Glen Helen Motocross on May 11-12, 2002), deposit eligible entry at the race as directed; or b) mail/transmit eligible entry as directed so that it is received by 11:59 p.m. (PT) on the Friday following each 2002 AMA Motocross series race (starting with the Glen Helen Motocross on May 11-12, 2002). To be included in the GRAND-PRIZE random drawing: a) On race day (starting with the Glen Helen Motocross on May 11-12, 2002), deposit eligible entry at the 2002 AMA Motocross series race as directed; or b) mail/transmit eligible entry as directed so that it is received at the latest by 11:59 p.m. (PT) on 10/31/02. **4. How to Enter:** Watch and you could Win! Watch a 2002 AMA Motocross series race, write down how the members of Chevy Team Kawasaki placed in the race. Then, on your sweepstakes entry, type (or handprint) the race date, location, and the top 3 places for Chevy Team Kawasaki (e.g. Chevy Team Kawasaki placed 1st, 2nd, 4th). Enter by one of the following methods: a) Complete entry form found at www.silveradoracetruck.com and transmit as directed; b) Complete an official entry form (type or handprint) and deposit or mail as directed; or c) On a 3" X 5" card, type or handprint your name, address, telephone number, age, and the Chevy Team Kawasaki race results from a 2002 AMA Motocross series race (for more details, see above), and mail your entry to: 2002 Silverado Race Truck Giveaway, P.O. Box 459, Dana Point, CA 92629-0459. Limit one entry per person for each 2002 AMA Motocross series race. You need not correctly identify the top 3 places of the Chevy Team Kawasaki, but you must fill-in a number in each indicated space. Sponsor/Administrator may also ask optional questions on entry form; completion of these questions is not required to enter the Sweepstakes. **5. Drawings:** This sweepstakes will have sixteen (16) drawings in all. Each entrant selected as a potential winner must comply with all terms and conditions set forth in these Official Rules, and winning is contingent upon fulfilling all such requirements. For each prize, a potential winner will be selected in a random drawing from all eligible entries received for that drawing. The drawing for the grand prize will be conducted on or about 11/12/02. The 15 drawings for each first prize will be conducted on (or about) the Monday that falls one week after each of the 2002 AMA Motocross series races (starting with the Glen Helen Motocross on May 11-12, 2002), or the next business day thereafter, if the Monday is a holiday. If for any reason the AMA races differ from the planned 15 races, the Administrator will alter the drawing dates so that in all, 15 first-prize winners are selected. All eligible non-winning entries included in each drawing will also be included in all subsequent drawings. Limit one prize per person. All drawings will be conducted by Alexander Direct (an independent judging organization). The decisions of the Sponsor, Administrator and Alexander Direct are final and binding in all matters relating to the Sweepstakes. Odds of winning depend on the total number of eligible entries received for each drawing. Potential winner of grand prize will be notified by mail by 11/15/02. Potential winners of each first prize will be notified by mail within about 2 weeks of each 2002 AMA Motocross series race (starting with the Glen Helen Motocross on May 11-12, 2002). If a potential winner cannot be contacted within ten (10) days after the first attempt to contact such potential winner, an alternate entrant will be selected in his or her place at random from all eligible entries received for the potential winner's original drawing. **6. Prizes:** A) There is one GRAND PRIZE, consisting of: i) A used, customized 2002 Chevy Silverado 1500 Extended Cab, short box, 4WD, LT (customization includes: Bed Rails, Tailgate Liner, Bed Mat, Bed Extender, Chrome Side Steps, and Brush/Grille Guard). The approximate retail value ("ARV") of the grand prize (including customization package) is $32,800; b) A 2002 Kawasaki KX250 motorcycle (ARV: $5,200). The total ARV of the grand prize is $38,000. Wear and tear and depreciation due to use and/or display at various events prior to prize delivery have been taken into account to arrive at the ARV of the above-mentioned truck and motorcycle, and the above-mentioned truck and motorcycle are awarded on an "as-is" basis except for any applicable manufacturer's warranties. Any expenses incurred by the grand-prize winner in the award of the prize (including but not limited to meals, lodging, transportation, and gratuities) will be the sole responsibility of the grand-prize winner. B) There are 15 FIRST PRIZES: Each first prize consists of a leather jacket with Chevrolet Racing logos. The ARV of each first prize is $350. **Number of Prizes:** Grand Prize: 1; First Prizes: 15. **Total Approximate Retail Value of All Prizes:** $43,250. Winner will be solely responsible for all vehicle title, license and registration fees, freight, delivery, dealer prep, emissions inspection, additional equipment, all federal, state and local taxes, insurance, gasoline, vehicle maintenance and all other fees and expenses associated with the receipt and use of the Grand-Prize vehicle. Grand-Prize winner is also responsible for all costs associated with registration, title and license fees, insurance and all other costs incurred in registering or using the vehicle. Grand-Prize winner must present valid driver's license and satisfactory proof of insurance prior to delivery. Sponsor and Administrator are not responsible for lost or mutilated prizes and none will be replaced. Prizes are nontransferable and must be accepted as awarded. No cash or other substitution may be made, except by Sponsor and/or Administrator in the event that a prize cannot be awarded for any reason, in which case, Sponsor and/or Administrator will award a prize(s) of equal or greater value. All taxes associated with each prize are the sole responsibility of prizewinner. **7. Other Terms and Conditions:** Potential winners will each be required to sign and return an Affidavit of Eligibility, Liability Release, and where lawful, a Publicity Release, within ten (10) days of postmark, failing which a potential winner will be disqualified and another winner selected in the place of the disqualified person in a random drawing from all eligible entries received for the potential winner's original drawing. If any prize or prize notification is returned as non-deliverable, the potential winner will be disqualified and another potential winner will be selected in the original potential winner's place. By accepting a prize, winner agrees that the Sponsor, Administrator, and those acting under the Sponsor's/Administrator's authority, may use winner's names, address, prize won, picture/portrait likeness and/or voice, for advertising and promotional purposes without further consideration, unless prohibited by law. **BY ACCEPTING A PRIZE, WINNERS AGREE THAT THE SPONSOR and ADMINISTRATOR, THEIR RESPECTIVE SUBSIDIARIES, AFFILIATES, ADVERTISING AND PROMOTION AGENCIES, AND ALL OF THE SPONSOR'S AND ADMINISTRATOR'S RESPECTIVE OFFICERS, DIRECTORS, EMPLOYEES, REPRESENTATIVES AND AGENTS, WILL HAVE NO LIABILITY WHATSOEVER FOR, AND WILL BE HELD HARMLESS BY EACH WINNER FOR ANY LIABILITY FOR ANY INJURY, LOSS OR DAMAGES OF ANY KIND TO PERSONS, INCLUDING DEATH, AND PROPERTY, DUE IN WHOLE OR IN PART, DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY, FROM THE ACCEPTANCE, POSSESSION, USE OR MISUSE OF A PRIZE, OR PARTICIPATION IN THIS SWEEPSTAKES, OR PARTICIPATION IN ANY SWEEPSTAKES OR PRIZE RELATED ACTIVITY.** Subject to all federal, state and local laws. Void where prohibited. 8. Miscellaneous: All entries become the sole property of Administrator and none will be returned. By entering, each entrant agrees to the collection of all information on each entry, and to its transfer to third parties. In the event of a dispute, entries made by Internet will be deemed made by the authorized account holder of the e-mail address submitted at the time of entry. The "authorized account holder" is deemed the natural person who is assigned to an e-mail address by an Internet access provider, service provider or other online organization that is responsible for assigning e-mail addresses for the domain associated with the submitted e-mail address. A potential winner may be requested to provide Sponsor and Administrator with proof that the potential winner is the authorized account holder of the e-mail address associated with the winning entry. If for any reason the Sweepstakes is not capable of running as planned, including due to infection by computer virus, bugs, tampering, unauthorized intervention, fraud, technical failure, human error or any other causes beyond the control of Sponsor and Administrator that corrupt or affect the administration, security, fairness, integrity, or proper conduct of the Sweepstakes, Sponsor and/or Administrator reserve the right in their sole discretion, to disqualify any individual who tampers with the entry process, and to cancel, terminate, modify or suspend the Sweepstakes. In which case, winners will be chosen in a random drawing from all eligible entries received prior to termination. Sponsor and Administrator assume no responsibility for any error, omission, interruption, deletion, defect, delay in operation or transmission, communications line failure, theft or destruction or unauthorized access to, or alteration of, entries. The Sponsor and Administrator are not responsible for any problems or technical malfunction of any telephone network or lines, computer online systems, servers, or providers, computer equipment, software, failure of any e-mail or entry to be received by Sponsor and/or Administrator on account of technical problems or traffic congestion on the Internet or at any web site, any combination thereof, or otherwise, including any injury or damage to entrant's or any other person's computer related to or resulting from participation or downloading any materials in the Sweepstakes. Sponsor and Administrator are not responsible for late, lost, illegible, incomplete, stolen, or misdirected entries. CAUTION: ANY ATTEMPT BY AN ENTRANT TO DELIBERATELY DAMAGE ANY WEB SITE OR UNDERMINE THE LEGITIMATE OPERATION OF THE SWEEPSTAKES MAY BE A VIOLATION OF CRIMINAL AND CIVIL LAWS AND SHOULD SUCH AN ATTEMPT BE MADE, SPONSOR AND ADMINISTRATOR RESERVE THE RIGHT TO SEEK DAMAGES FROM ANY SUCH PERSON TO THE FULLEST EXTENT PERMITTED BY LAW. **9. Winners List:** A complete list of prizewinners will be available by 11/26/02 at www.silveradoracetruck.com or by sending a SASE after 11/26/02 to: 2002 Silverado Race Truck Giveaway, Winners' List, P.O. Box 459, Dana Point, CA 92629-0459. **10.Sponsor:** Chevrolet Motor Division of General Motors Corporation, 100 Renaissance Center, Detroit, MI 48265; (the "Sponsor"). **11. Administrator:** PRIMEDIA Specialty Group, Inc., 6420 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90048-5515 (the "Administrator").

Vehicle shown is an illustration, actual prize vehicle may vary slightly.

paper, all that extremist steering geometry could add up to one edgy little twin, but mostly it doesn't. As you'd expect with such racy numbers, the bike is tremendously sensitive to suspension settings. The difference between love and hate is just a few clicks in the wrong direction. However, dialed in correctly and ridden on its own terms, the Firebolt can be a serious back-road tool.

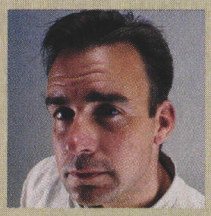
The key is keeping most of the bike's weight on the front wheel by dialing up rear spring preload, with just enough up front to keep the fork from bottoming. Unbolting the seat (after peeling up the edge of the foam, yick!) with a Torx key from the abbreviated tool kit reveals a ramped adjuster set on the second (of seven) preload settings, with compression and rebound screws dialed out 1.5 turns. The fork preload adjusters come with four (of seven lines) showing, with compression and rebound screws unwound 1.5 turns from maximum. Thus set, the Firebolt should work for an average 140–175 pound rider possessed of average skills on average roads.

For an aggressive, 200-pounder on diabolically convoluted pavement, stock settings don't work, making the Firebolt only slightly more nimble than a '66 International Harvester milk truck. Heavier riders place more weight on the rear of the bike, and the Buell definitely doesn't like that setup. To compensate, bump shock preload to number five (moving the weight forward again) and you'll be able to filet a decreasing-radius right—or just about any other corner you're likely to dive into—with near-amazing grace. Set up thusly, steering is light, linear and precise as long as you use at least a little throttle to keep the chassis loaded and happy. The fork and shock are compliant enough over all but the nastiest pavement, though midcorner bumps and grooves a longer bike would ignore can unsettle the Buell's composure.

Life is beautiful as long as you play by the rules. Keep the tach needle between 5000 and 7200 rpm for maximum thrust, and be smooth. Momentum is the name of this game: Once you've got it, keep it. There's a lot of heavy metal spinning around between your feet, so don't rush the gearbox. Slamming the throttle shut on the way into a corner—a bad idea on any bike—cranks up the steering effort considerably and puts precise cornering somewhere between difficult and impossible. Even if you forget the other stuff, remember to brake, *then* turn. The big inside-out rotor and six-pot caliper are a reasonably powerful combination. Initial bite is good, but feel disappears under hard braking. Credit some measure of this vagueness to a caliper that flexes visibly under a handful of front brake. Once heeled over, even a little front brake makes the Firebolt stand up and run wide. Experienced testers who carry a little front brake into corners complained about spooky, unpredictable steering until they changed their ways. You can forget dialing in more mainstream handling with some extra trail. Dropping the fork legs in their clamps and softening the shock to neutralize the chassis makes for painfully slow, heavy steering no matter how smooth your style.

When the credits roll, Buell's Firebolt is either a breakthrough or a bomb depending upon those expectations you checked at the door. Devotees of American iron and ingenuity are already dancing in the streets. Here's a domestic sportbike with technical credentials anyone can be proud of. But a truly capable American sportbike? Hard-nosed speed freaks will recite the litany of faster machinery at or under the Firebolt's $9995 sticker price, and dismiss it as an oxymoron powered by an anachronism. And what about the great huddled masses camping out in between? If you're looking for the ultimate back-road weapon, look elsewhere. But if something truly unique is what you're after—a viable American alternative to the Ubiquitous Japanese Racer Replicant—and you can accept life strictly on its terms, this could be your bike. MC

Off the Record



cook
Age: 39
Height: 5 ft. 10 in.
Weight: 190 lb.
Inseam: 32 in.
Favorite Dinosaur Band: Holy Modal Rounders

Dear Mr. Bleustein: Good seeing you at the V-Rod intro, where your minions were justifiably proud of that bike's high-tech engine and cutting-edge chassis, to say nothing of its stunning styling. Job well done, I say, and ya'll have a happy 100th birthday. Now, about this Buell. I'm sure Buell has been a pain in your checkbook for too long now, and I hear you've told the boys in Buell's garage to get it right this time or start lining up a moving company. But here's the problem: Where Erik has had some freedom—styling, build quality—he's done extremely well. The XB9R Firebolt is beautifully finished, in some ways more so than the core Harley-Davidson products, but it's still saddled with that lump of an engine. You may remember 1957 wistfully, but for the enthusiast the Buell brand needs to capture, that cranky, lumpy, too-large dinosaur is a huge dissuasion. Be strong, Big J, and call down to accounting and loose the cash for Buell to have its own engine, a truly modern engine. It's the only way for the brand to survive. Warmest regards. —M.C.

boehm
Age: 39
Height: 6 ft.
Weight: 225 lb.
Inseam: 32 in.
Favorite Dinosaur Band: The Rolling Stones

It's hard to disagree with Cook on the whole "engine" thing. Erik Buell's team deserves big-time credit for making what's arguably a Sportster-based engine perform decently in terms of power delivery, shifting and—so far, at least—durability. But even after all the improvements and effort, the end result is only comparable with, say, Ducati's Pantah-based 900 Supersport engine, hardly a shining example of 21st-century design or engineering. Even worse are all the design gymnastics the chassis team had to undergo in order to package everything around that tall and heavy engine. The Firebolt is neat-looking, unique and plenty charismatic. But functionally it's quite a few years behind the times, and that's a shame given all the money, effort and sweat that went into it. —M.B.

www.triumph.co.uk

Take a really fast ride down Memory Lane.

This is the 2002 Thunderbird. It has crisp, classical styling. Clean yet elegant. To a lot of people, this is what a motorcycle, especially a Triumph, ought to look like. What the best motorcycles have always looked like.

On the other hand, the T-bird's performance is strictly 21st century. The big three-cylinder engine serves up gobs of torque. Steering is quick and precise. The brakes reassuringly powerful.

This new Thunderbird is exactly what T-birds have been since the first one was introduced in the late '40's. Powerful, competent, do-anything machines. Owning one is an experience you are unlikely to forget.

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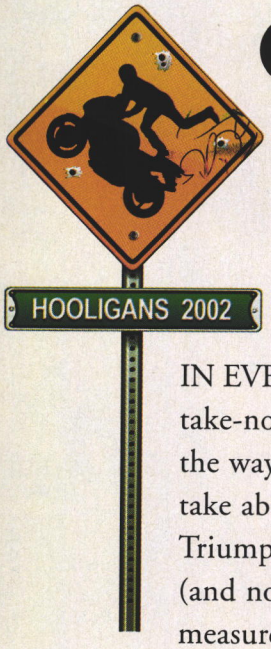
The Big Dogs



Honda's 919 and Triumph's Speed Triple show the little guys how it's done

IN EVERY PACK THERE'S AN ALPHA DOG, THE SNARLING, take-no-BS member of the group who sets the tone and leads the way. Park these two liter-sized Hooligans together and it'll take about two seconds to realize which one is the A-model: the Triumph Speed Triple. It's big and beefy, packing a charismatic (and now more powerful) inline-triple, and simply has the visual measure of the comparatively staid Honda 919.

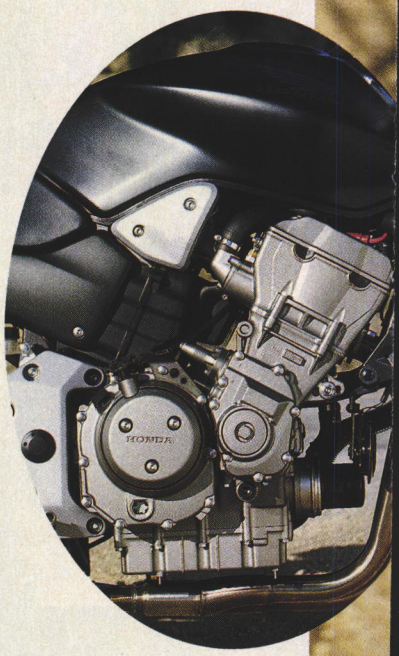
Triumph completes this victory of attitude by being closer to—and perhaps better understanding—the roots of the whole Hooligan/streetfighter thing. As our man Dexter "the closet Hooligan" Ford has suggested, the original streetfighter was likely a Suzuki GSX-R750 or 1100 sent through the bramble car wash and subsequently stripped of its expensive, now-shattered bodywork and fitted with a tubular bar. All the other bits—headlight, instruments, etc.—were catch as catch can, just enough to make the bike road-legal.

In the Speed Triple, Triumph has this spirit pegged. The chassis is the previous-generation Daytona's, including high-spec, fully adjustable suspension, excellent brakes, single-sided swingarm and beefy tires. There's no inane component cost-cutting for marketing reasons, only a bit of mild detuning of the 955cc triple. (For 2002, the fabulous engine has less gear clatter and more power, though it's still milder than the Daytona's.)

With 114 horsepower on tap, the Triumph's powerplant proves to be as rapid as it is smooth. Our test bike had much better throttle response than the last Daytona we tried—the Sagem fuel injection has been further tweaked this year, and uses an oxygen sensor for the first time—which we hear is mainly due to setup. Triumph aficionados and experts say the initial setup of the injection is critical to the bike's good behavior. If only the Speed Triple's gearing were more oriented to the real world; it's so tall that on tight roads you're caught in that big gap between first and second. Two or three more teeth on the back sprocket, please.

The critical distinction is that the Speed Triple is a real sportbike merely stripped bare, and on the road this turns out to be its greatest strength. With slightly more aggressive geometry this year, the Triple proves astonishingly agile, with quick but predictable steering that enables you to trade punches with just about any bike on the tightest road you know.

You'll be working hard to equal the 919 on that kind of snaky blacktop, though. If the Honda fails to have the Triumph's "toss-off" attitude—indeed, the 919's styling is more modern UJM with a coat of controversial semi-



Above: Honda's stout-at-heart, CBR900RR-based engine slithers into a 600-sized chassis, providing huge grins and on-throttle wheelies with impetuous ease. It is a mite thrashy, however. Right: You want the time, buy a watch. Simple instruments lead a Nighthawkesque tubular-steel bar. The aftermarket is your oyster for replacements.

SHOEI

flat black paint than a true streetfighter—it certainly provides its own rewards. Where the Triumph tends to barge through corners—you brake hard, use that wide bar to flick it in and surge out on the crest of the Triple's torque wave—the 919 is a much finer tool. It will turn with an immediacy that's wholly in keeping with its 600-class dimensions, and though the suspension is softer and less controlled than the Triple's, the 919 douses you in confidence. Even as you're grinding the peg feelers (and, occasionally, the sidestand foot), the little gray guy seems eager for more.

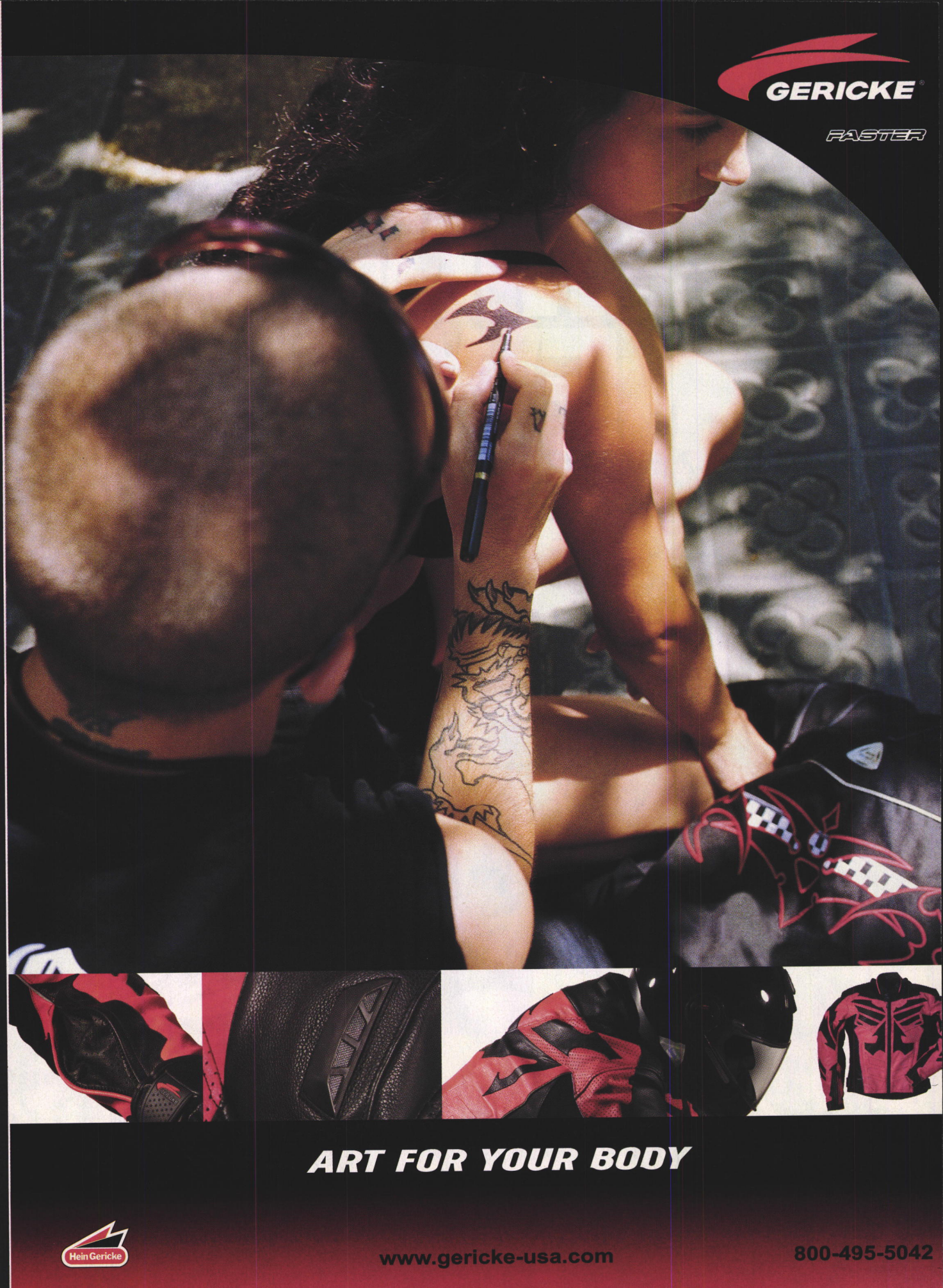
Although the 919 is down on peak power compared with the Triple, it doesn't feel that way. At 485 pounds wet (six pounds less than the Speed Triple), the 919 turns its 100-horsepower thrust into acceleration—or wheelies, burnouts, lurid slides—with comparative ease. We should also note that our original test bike returned to us with Bridgestone BT56s in place of the Michelin Hi-Sports, and the bike feels even better and more confident. Imagine what a current-generation tire would do.

In many ways, the differences between the Triumph and the Honda are similar to those drawn between the 919 and the FZ1. The larger Speed Triple fits taller riders better, and its size fails to put them off; tiny tots gravitate to the svelte 919 and appreciate its light, quick steering and lower seat height—all the easier to recover from some bit of Hooliganism gone wrong. Neither bike is a great freeway device—a small cockpit cover is available for the Speed Triple, while a quarter fairing is coming for the 919—but the Triple has the advantage of a smoother engine and higher-quality, more compliant suspension.

Both bikes are great for the bad boy around town, and while the Triple is clearly the alpha male, the scrappy 919 is right there, nipping at its heels.

—Marc Cook

Top: Triumph revised the 955cc triple this year, giving it more grunt along with improved manners. Too bad it looks like an oil-derrick motor from the other side. Above: New clocks are sweet.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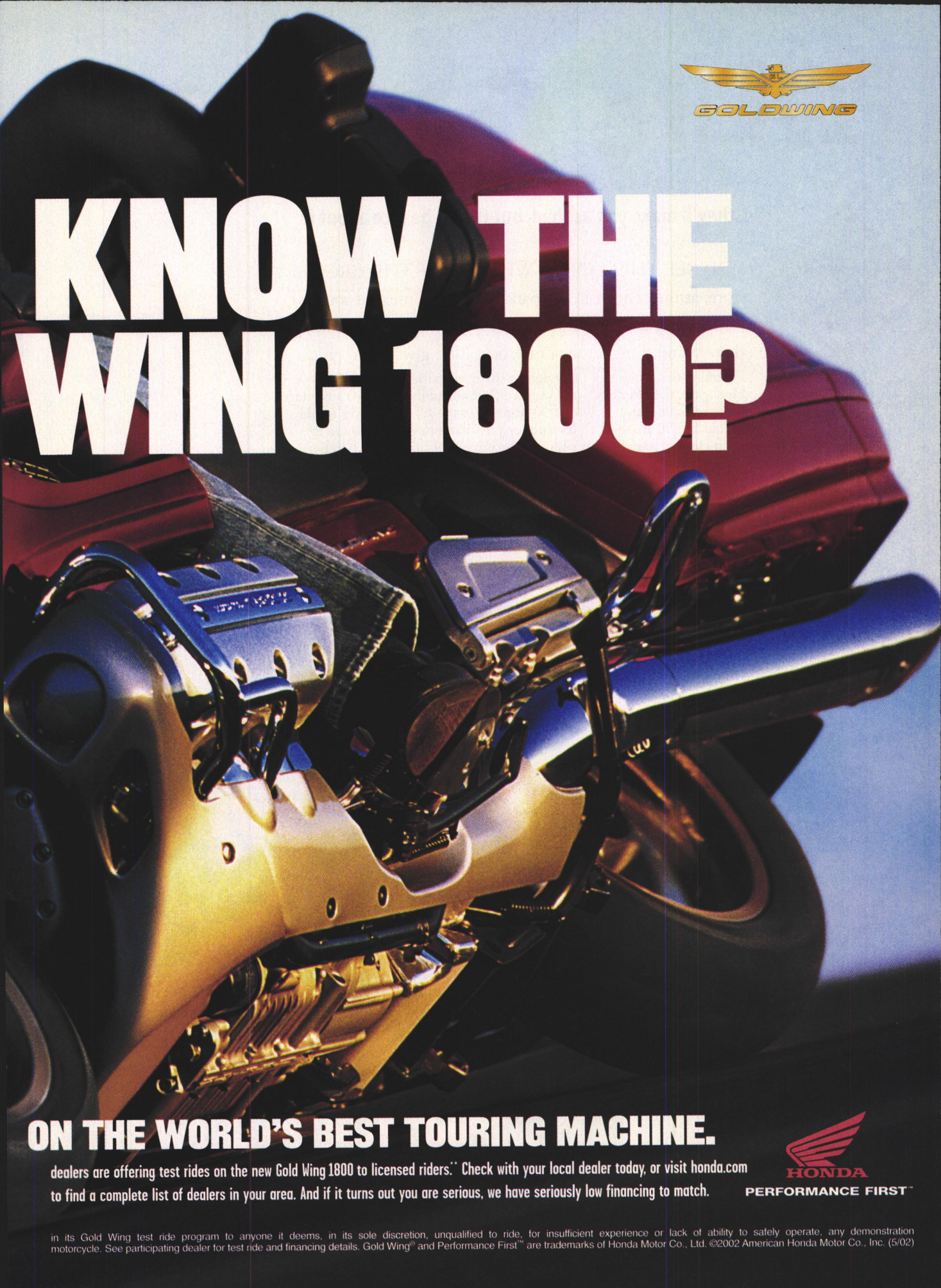
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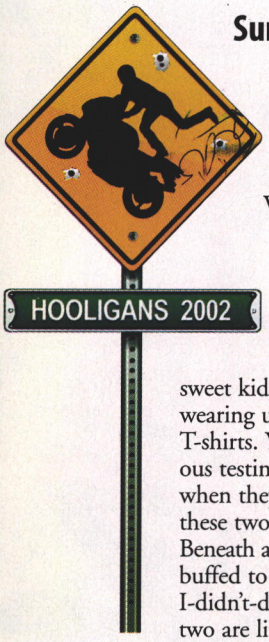
Sure, they'll make you act bad, but they'll be nice about it



YOU SEE THEM EVERYWHERE—AT THE GROCERY store, at the concert in the park—happy, contented souls who wouldn't enter a heated argument if Dee Snider were standing there brandishing a tube of lipstick. Nice guys—and girls.

Among this group of Hooligans, the Ducati Monster 620i.e. and Suzuki SV650 are the sweet kids, clean-cut and found wearing unsoiled Heal the Bay T-shirts. Yet we know, from arduous testing and watching them when they aren't looking, that for these two it's just a facade. Beneath a surface so carefully buffed to an innocent, I-didn't-do-it sheen these two are little hellions, each the two-wheel equivalent of the devil on your shoulder egging you to "wheelie, stoppie, go faster, faster, *faster*."

For a president's term now, the SV650 has been making bad examples out of normally good, sensible riders, a remarkable feat for what is essentially an entry-level model. In spite of that term—or because of it?—the SV has become a cult bike of sorts, with a tremendous aftermarket supporting every SV owner's modifying moment of weakness. Partly for this reason and partly for price, SVs are everywhere.

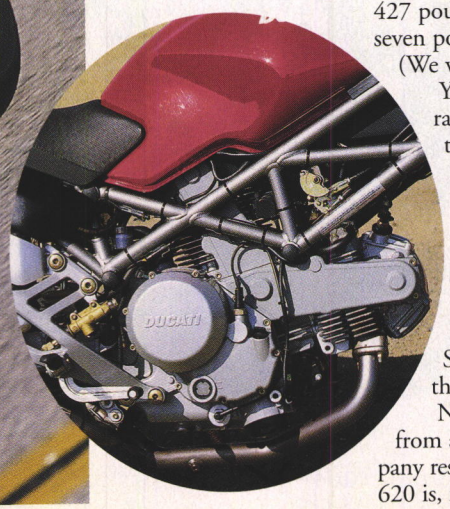
One ride and you'll understand why. This is a motorcycle with attitude. Despite softly calibrated suspension—easily remedied by the many enterprising modifiers—the SV packs real sportbike appeal. Nudge the tubular bar and it turns in without hesitation or slop. Grab a handful of throttle in the lower two gears, sit back and up she comes. There's a slight dip in the power around 6000 rpm, and when she comes through the other side, it's mono-bonzo time.

Underlying your sudden desire to commit serial abuse of the vehicle code is a sense of utter trust in the little SV650. It's so confidence-inspiring that even low-time riders soon feel the urge to cut loose—and for experienced hacks the SV is an engraved invitation for public displays of stupidity. You are powerless to refuse.

The gem of an engine—think of a downsized TL1000 powerplant that actually doesn't share any parts—pays off totally on the vaunted (but not easily achieved) advantages of a 90-degree V-twin. It's smooth yet rumbly. It's torquey yet willing to rev. It's easy to live with yet charismatic. With approximately 70 horsepower on tap, the SV's mighty motor wallops every twin of similar displacement.

All one of them: the Monster 620i.e. It's fair to say Ducati hasn't produced a bona fide

Below: Ducati's seemingly evergreen *desmodue* engine received tweaks galore for 2002; the fuel injection is excellent, and power, while not in the SV650's league, is entirely acceptable.



entry-level masher this much fun since the original Pantahs, to which the current bike owes much. For 2002, the smallest Monster has been revamped and more properly focused for nascent malcontents. With superbly calibrated fuel injection, the two-valve engine makes a reasonable 55.6 horsepower (at 9000 rpm) and presents a laudably flat torque curve. Admittedly, the Monster has fewer horses to drag a bigger wagon of hay (at 427 pounds, the Monster outweighs the SV by seven pounds), but it seldom feels out of breath. (We wouldn't mind a sixth gear, however.)

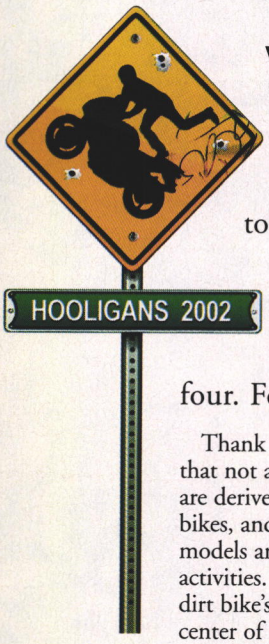
Yet the difference in power-to-weight ratio turns out to be a good indicator of the bikes' personalities. To make good time, the SV encourages a good thrashing, but the Monster *demands* it. The SV is unconcerned about gear selection, the Monster *particular*. No, it's not the difference between a single-cam CB750 with a mouse in the airbox and a GSX-R1000; but when you jump from the SV to the Monster the horses left outside the gate are immediately evident.

No one expects Ducati to make big power from an old engine, and we're glad the company resisted the temptation. As it is, the Monster 620 is, in many ways, the most pleasant of the current Monsters. For a low seat height, the suspension is soft and, for once, gifted with appropriately cushy damping; the 620 rides Southern California's ripply freeways like a much larger motorcycle. Yep, the handlebar is still too wide and the footpegs seem incongruously splayed for a V-twin, but the ergonomic flaws—indeed glaring flaws of any type—are unexpectedly absent.

Right: Oh, don't be shy. The half-hidden SV mill epitomizes everything we love about V-twins: generous torque, plenty of charisma and lots of wheelie-assisting flywheel effect.

Still, there's no contesting the price. Suzuki sells a million SVs and has kept the cost to $5799. Ducati sells a million Monsters (but, hey, it's Ducati), and has whittled the 620's tag down to $6999 in the Dark version. If you want paint, prepare to pony up an additional $300. You may be able to hammer your Ducati dealer a bit and get the two bikes closer in cost—just be nice about it. —*M.C.*

1-800-HOOLIGAN



You make the call

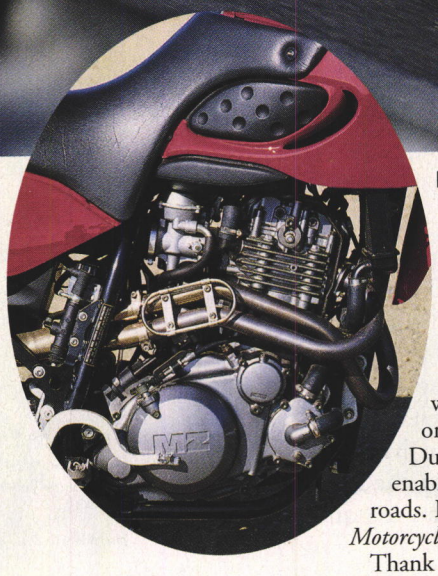
THANK YOU FOR CALLING HOOLIGAN HOTLINE, YOUR number-one source for Hooligan assistance. Your call may be monitored to ensure an appropriately surly experience. Please listen carefully to the menu of options, as many have changed. For help with your wheelies, press one. For help with your stoppies, press two. For help with your smoky burnouts, press three. For legal assistance, press four. For help understanding dirt-derived Hooligan bikes, press five.

Thank you. It is well known that not all Hooligan-specific bikes are derived from crashed sportbikes, and that many dirt-based models are available for Hooligan activities. Experts in the field say a dirt bike's low weight and high center of gravity make it easier to wheelie, while its long-travel suspension smoothes landings from jumping cars and curbs. It is also understood that these narrow motorcycles are ideal for urban commuting. For more information on KTM's Duke, press one.

Thank you. KTM is an Austrian company well known in dirt circles for its four-stroke motocross and enduro models. The Duke, introduced in 1995 and based on the company's LC4 enduro model, has become a favorite of Hooligans, five times given Hooligan Hotline's "Best Hooligan to Be Arrested On" award. To hear five sure-fire excuses for law enforcement, press one. To continue, press two.

Thank you. KTM's Duke differs from the LC4's chassis in important ways for the modern Hooligan. In place of dirt-sized wheels and tires, the Duke rides on cast-aluminum hoops shod with leading-edge sportbike rubber. Its suspension, high-quality WP pieces, has shorter travel than the dirt model's. A large Brembo front brake provides sufficient power to commit

Right: You can take the engine out of the dirt.... KTM's 625cc, four-valve thumper is actually a bit peaky but thoroughly entertaining. Dirt-style gearing makes in-town Hooliganism a cinch.



Left: The Baghira's Yamaha-built thumper is surprisingly smooth and gifted with a wide, flat torque curve. It's marginally down on power next to the Duke's but feels more stolid than stunning.

stoppie after stoppie without fade or worry of slithering off into a crowd of onlookers. *Motorcyclist* magazine says the Duke is capable of prodigious lean angles, enabling it to be the king of the tightest roads. For a special subscription offer from *Motorcyclist*, press one. To continue, press two.

Thank you. Hooligan Hotline strives to offer a balanced perspective, so you should know the Duke is not a long-distance traveling machine. The 625cc engine, though surprisingly powerful at 48.9 horsepower, shakes madly, particularly around 5000 rpm. Our correspondents in the field have likened the ride to "paint-shaker." The Duke's three-gallon tank limits range, and the seat, which is the same as the LC4's, has been described as "medieval." For a listing of Hooligan Hotline-approved physical therapists, press one. To hear about the MuZ Baghira, press two.

Thank you. The MuZ is powered by a Yamaha-built, five-valve 660cc single that produces 44.7 horsepower. Our Hooligan operatives report the Yamaha's engine is much smoother than the KTM's, with a flatter torque curve; as a consequence it feels far less lively. It is geared slightly taller than the Duke, also, making snap wheelies a bit more difficult. To receive a discount on clutch plates, press one. To continue, press two.

Thank you. Unlike the KTM, whose suspension is shortened for the Duke, the Baghira's remains essentially the same travel as the dual-purpose model. This leads to more pitching action during tomfoolery, *Motorcyclist* says, and, along with the more tenuous grip of the Pirelli motard-style tires, prevents full-ahead charges on public roads. Also, the MuZ's Grimeca front brake is not terribly powerful, causing most Hooligans to work harder at stoppies. At 397 pounds wet, the Baghira, some 40 pounds heavier than the Duke, can still get away with more extreme slides on mixed pavement, thanks to those Pirellis. For an explanation of the difference between dirt and pavement, press one. To learn why Hooligans buy dirt-based bikes, press two.

Thank you. We at Hooligan Hotline understand that the sense of freedom and agility are the overpowering reasons our rank buy bikes such as the $7999 Duke and the $6195 Baghira. *Motorcyclist* calls them "good, clean Hooligan fun." To go for a ride, press one....

Thank you for calling. And have a nice day.

—*M.C.*

BMW's Marco von Maltzan

BMW's motorcycle-division CEO goes on the record about Boxers, fours, racing, financial success and future products

By Alan Cathcart
Photos By Kyoichi Nakamura

TALK ABOUT BIG-TIME SUCCESS. IN 2001, BMW Motorrad—the Motorcycle division of the famous German car-maker—achieved its ninth successive record year in terms of both annual revenue (now approximately $1 billion) and production. To do so, BMW built and delivered nearly 100,000 motorcycles (95,327 to be exact) to its worldwide customers in '01, a 17.3 percent increase from the year before and a number that cemented the company's position as Europe's largest motorcycle (not scooter) manufacturer. That number included nearly 11,000 examples of its ground-breaking C1, BMW's alternative solution to urban transport (built by Bertone in Italy), as well as approximately 18,000 examples of the best-selling F650 in three different guises.

A significant factor in this growth is BMW's increased sales in the United States, up to 13,023 units in '01, with Italy (10,151), France (7213), Great Britain (3428) and Japan (2801) next up in terms of export sales. Even so, all these lagged behind the booming home market, where BMW sales were up by 6.6 percent to 25,345 bikes, bucking an overall 7.2 percent decline in the German market during the same period.

The man who has headed the company's return to the top slot in European motorcycle production is 47-year-old Marco von Maltzan, the debonair and aristocratic managing director of BMW Motorcycles. After joining BMW in '87, he worked in strategic planning and in the auto side of the company's R&D department before a spell in France occupying a key post in its local subsidiary there. Von Maltzan joined the board of BMW Motorcycles in '96, initially as the division's chief financial officer, before becoming CEO of the whole two-wheeled operation in September '99. The chance to talk to him in his executive office at BMW's home base of Munich, Germany, helped answer some of the questions surrounding the future direction of the high-profile but relatively secretive German marque.

***Alan Cathcart*: Like Ducati's CEO Carlo di Biagio, you're a biking beancounter. Do you have an engineering background as well as a financial one?**

Marco von Maltzan: (Laughs.) Actually, I have a master's degree in mechanical engineering, as well as a master's qualification in business administration. I play both sides of the fence!

Have you been a motorcyclist long?

Yes, I rode a bike [in college], starting with a Moto Guzzi, then a Honda. But then I stopped for many years, and only started riding bikes again when I joined the motorcycle division six years ago. But I don't get the chance to ride very much here in Germany because of my job commitments, even though my kids really like coming with me on a bike. Most of my riding takes place abroad, when I travel to our foreign distributors. We always have a big ride each year after our annual planning meeting, wherever that takes place.

BMW Motorcycles is coming off its ninth successive record year, but before that sales were flat, and your market share was rather poor. To what do you attribute the turnaround during your tenure?

There are several factors. First, we launched a product offensive in 1993, underpinned by technical features we were the first to develop: ABS, for example, which we introduced as long ago as

BMW's CEO von Maltzan is a rider, not just a suit. Don't ask about the tie.

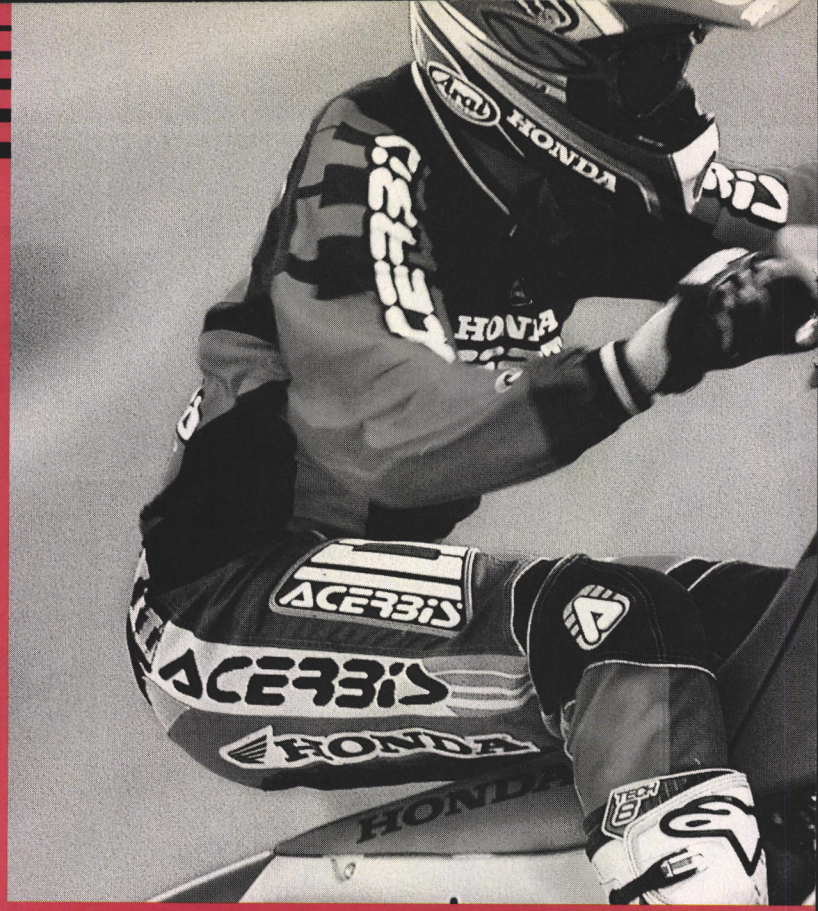
'88, and have continuously developed since. Today we are the only manufacturer whose entire model range can be fitted with either ABS or catalytic converters, which we were also the first to introduce. I believe these and other features like Telelever front suspension represent a strategy where BMW is positioned as a very innovative, technological leader in motorcycle design. We also improved our styling and invested substantially in improving our manufacturing facilities at our Berlin factory, as well as in our dealer structure all over the world. All these factors came together to allow us to take full advantage of the improvement in market conditions during the past six years.

Is it correct, also, to link this improvement in BMW's fortunes with the reinvention of the Boxer family, which until 10 years ago seemed to be headed for the scrap heap?

Definitely. The launch of the R1100RS in 1993 was the beginning of this product offensive, spearheaded by the Boxer series. Shortly afterward we introduced the F650 single, which gave us an entry-level model. But the Boxer was for sure the catalyst for our success in the past decade.

What is the relative importance of the German home market to BMW, compared with export sales? Is it like the American market is for Harley-

"... we launched a product offensive in 1993, underpinned by technical features we were the first to develop...."



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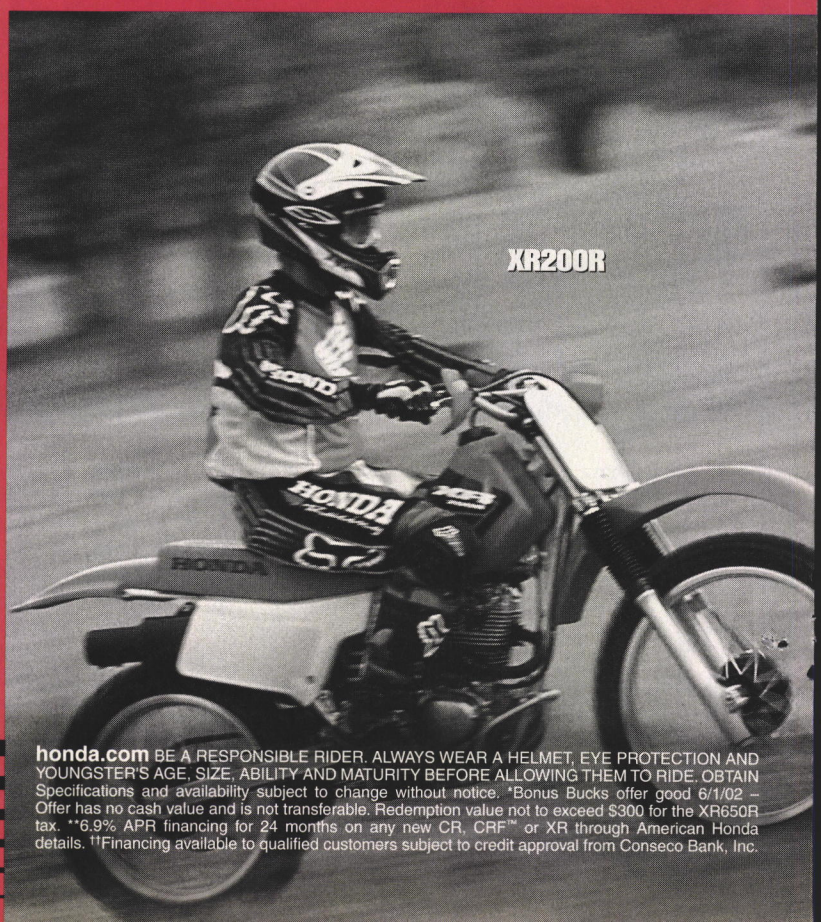

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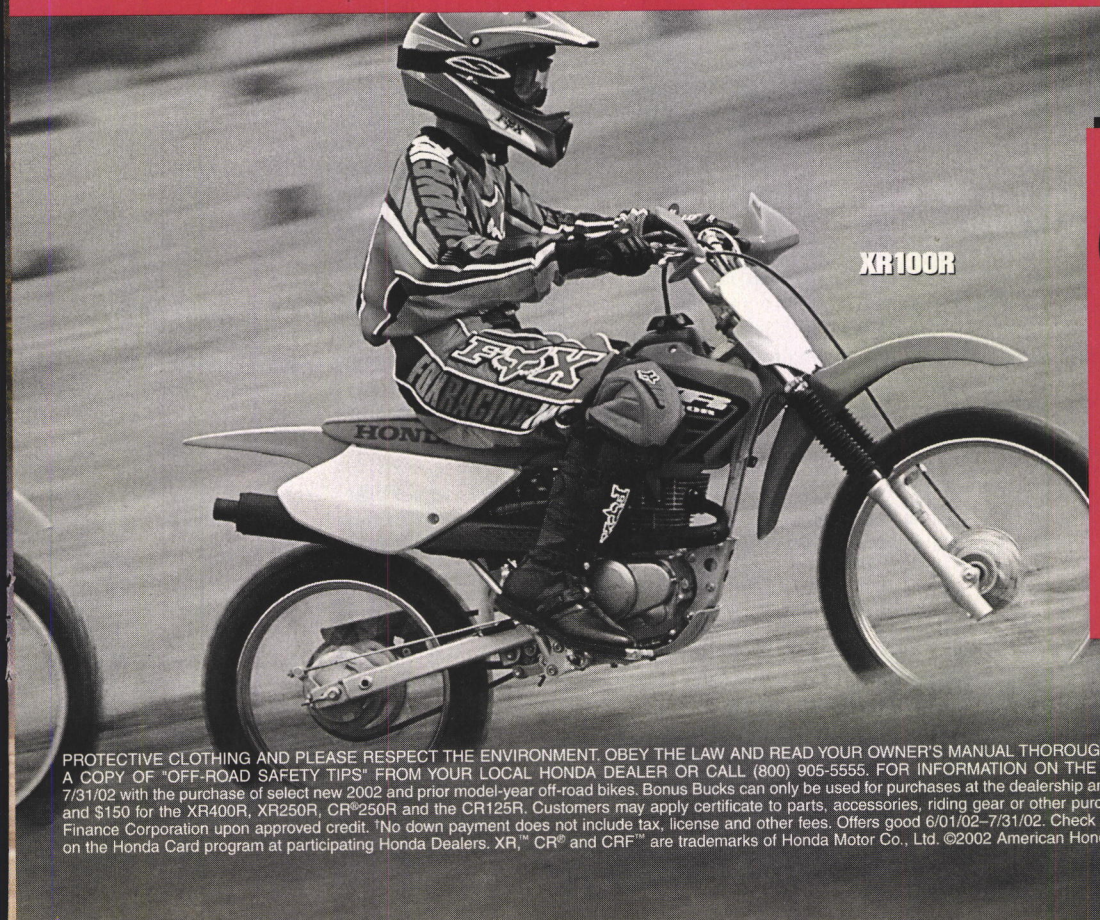

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Sir Alan (right) tries on his disarming-journalist smile as he grills BMW's boss on the future of the marque's motorcycles, but von Maltzan isn't biting. "Sorry, Alan, I can't answer that. What would you like for lunch?"

Davidson, where the product is specifically tailored to the home customer and any overseas sales are seen as a bonus?

The German market is still very important for us, but on the other hand, if you look at our figures from six years ago, our export share was around 65 percent. Today it represents 70 percent of our entire revenue. OK, in the past two years we gained market share enormously in Germany, where we now have around 16 percent in total, but on the global scale we have 6.6 percent of the world market, so you can see how important the German market is to us. However, it is, after all, the second-largest motorcycle market in the world, and anyway it's quite normal for home-market sales to dominate turnover for a European manufacturer.

How many BMW Motorcycles employees are there in Germany?

We have a payroll of 2600 employees, of which around 1900 in Spandau [Berlin] are involved in manufacturing. But we're in the process of investing $150 million in expanding and improving the plant. Originally, it was laid out to produce just 30,000 units each year; but in 2001 we manufactured 90,000 units there. We're building a new 16,000 square-meter extension, now including our own paint shop, all aimed at continuing our profitable growth; not just growth for its own sake, but the kind where you make more money from building more products, which we can then reinvest in the business.

Do you envision an eventual production ceiling for BMW Motorcycles, now that an annual 100,000 units is within your grasp. Will you put a brake on production to retain some element of exclusivity?

No, we wouldn't invest such substantial sums in improving our production facilities if we didn't intend to keep growing the company beyond 100,000 units a year.

Do you plan to continue concentrating production uniquely in Berlin, or will you expand this globally in the interests of lowering costs by building another factory elsewhere?

No, we will not do that. Our motorcycle production site is Spandau, and we have been there for so many years, since even before [World War II], when we produced motorcycle components there before moving the entire motorcycle factory from Munich to Berlin in 1967–'69. We remained there throughout the sad period of partition for Germany, and we're very happy with this site, because we have a highly educated workforce, with good training. Ninety-seven percent of them have a craftsman's qualification, which is an exceptionally high proportion, and though we keep adding new workers—we took on an extra 250 last year—it's no problem to find the right kind of employee there on an ongoing basis. It's just a pity that, as we keep on growing, the company gets to be so big I can't get to know everyone who works in it. I try very often—at least one day a week—to be at the assembly line in Berlin at 6:00 A.M. when the shift starts so I can talk to people and find out what they think about what we're doing, get a feel for what their concerns are, get feedback on how they see the company. Keeping everything in Berlin is our chosen plan. So, no, we won't build a motorcycle factory anywhere else in the forseeable future, and, in fact, the plans of our automobile colleagues to develop a new car factory at Leipzig, not so far from Berlin, only reinforces that decision, because we think that several of our common suppliers will join them in that region, which will benefit us.

"Today we are the only manufacturer whose entire model range can be fitted with either ABS or catalytic converters...."

At one stage it was rumoured a management buy-out was projected, to spin the bike division off as a separate company. Was such a step considered?

No, and we have no such intention at the present time, either. BMW Motorcycles will remain an integral part of the BMW group.

Do you envision any other F-series variants, such as a sportier version of the CS tarmac model? How do you see the singles family developing?

First, we are extremely happy with the development of the single. When we first decided to create this model, we projected a total of 30,000 units during its lifetime; and so far we've built more than 60,000 examples, far exceeding expectations. It was actually a very important move for us, because we've confirmed that after riding one of the BMW singles, customers do move up to a multicylinder model and retain significant BMW brand loyalty in doing so. We don't have proof that this crosses over to our car range, but given

our product range and price position, being a premium motorcycle manufacturer, we do have synergies with the car side when you look at our customer base. That's one of the reasons we've moved toward combined dealers more and more. Look at Italy, for example, and you'll see that we sell over 50 percent of our motorcycle turnover there from combined dealers. This is a trend that we expect to intensify worldwide.

But will you expand the singles range?
For the time being there are no plans. We have the GS version on the one hand, with the Dakar spinoff, which has far outsold our wildest expectations for what was conceived as a niche model, and we just came out with the CS for which early sales have been pretty good. This was a rather revolutionary new product for which we received a lot of positive press comments applauding us for being so courageous for producing something so different. Our idea was to come up with a product that was typically BMW, unique and different, but also attractive for new, youthful customers as well as those coming back to motorcycling but who wanted something not so challenging to ride.

The Boxer was reinvented in 1993 and since then you've expanded the range to provide a wide scope of alternative products. Will there be a Monsteresque street rod, for example? Or a fully equipped R1200LT maxi-tourer—a sort of Bavarian Electra Glide based on the R1200C? What's the thinking behind these forthcoming new models, which you're reliably understood to have under development?
I will answer your question in a different way. First, the American market is very important to us and is also still growing faster than any other. Generally speaking, we are well positioned there in terms of our range, and we increased our market share in the United States considerably over the past four years. But I would say that we haven't yet exploited our full potential there. So we think we need a greater presence in the U.S. market, and since, more than 50 percent of American bike sales are cruisers, for the time being our product in that segment is limited in comparison with our competitors. So we will soon offer a larger product range than we have today—including developments based on existing models, as well as specific models made for the target segment.

Do you have any plans to produce a high-performance sport version of the Boxer, perhaps with double overhead camshafts?
No.

How about the four-cylinder range? It dates to 1983, so over the past 20 years the format has become increasingly dated and has certain compromises in its architecture, which your development has only circumvented rather than resolved. Does BMW plan to launch a new four-cylinder range in the near future, perhaps with a new engine format with an across-the-frame configuration?
Well, as you said yourself, the engine dates to 1983, and it's still selling extremely well, way above expectations. But your assumption is right—we're already working on a new four-cylinder design. Although this is not for tomorrow, it's a firm future project.

Will the new K-series have an across-the-frame four-cylinder engine layout, rather than the existing lengthways layout?
(Smiles.) I don't know yet.

Would such a new engine design also form the basis of a BMW attack on the mega-cruiser market in the United States—the kind of market Honda serves with the Valkyrie, or Triumph is targeting with the forthcoming 2.2-liter Twenty-Two triple?
Er…sorry, but that's getting too close to breaking our policy about not talking specifically about new models.

OK, but so far you've only gone to a maximum of four cylinders for a BMW motorcycle engine—but your six-cylinder cars are perceived as market leaders worldwide. Any plans to make a six-cylinder BMW motorcycle?
Well (pauses) no, no plans.

Let's turn to the C1. BMW received a lot of criticism from the mainstream motorcycle press for producing a "two-wheeled car." But it seems you've had the last laugh, because sales are good. Are you satisfied with the way it's turned out commercially?
Yes, when we launched the model we said we wanted to sell around 10,000 units a year, and that was the basis of our agreement with Bertone to construct them for us. To be frank, there is not a comparable product in the marketplace, so I think it was quite courageous for BMW to come

"…we have a highly educated workforce, with good training. Ninety-seven percent of them have a craftsman's qualification…."

KEVIN WING

The first Oilhead Boxer arrived in 1993 as the R1100RS and signaled BMW's renewed interest in the opposed-twin configuration that made it famous. Among the current twins are the company's best-selling models.

KEVIN WING

The K1200LT merged more conspicuously than ever BMW's automotive design philosophies with the two-wheeled division's engineering. Although not a direct competitor for mega-barges such as the Honda Gold Wing, the K-LT was the first manifestation of BMW's sharpened focus in foreign (that'd be us) markets. Expect more like it.

up with such a mold-breaking product. And you're right when you say we got a lot of criticism for doing so from many sections of the motorcycle press. But by marrying the advantages of a car with those of a motorcycle, we addressed one of the key issues of people's lives today, which is personal mobility. In doing so, we underlined our ability at BMW to come up with innovative solutions, and from this point of view we are very satisfied with the reaction of our customers to it. Our greatest disappointment is that we cannot envisage selling the C1 outside Europe, especially in the United States, which I believe is a market for which it is ideally suited. But the technical changes that would be needed for it to gain EPA approval are so great that we would have to completely re-engineer it, and this is simply not feasible costwise. It's a great pity.

"...your assumption is right—we're already working on a new four-cylinder design. Although this is not for tomorrow, it's a firm future project."

Your motorcycle range has often been the first and sometimes the only bikes to display features like Telelever, Paralever, ABS, EFI, catalyst exhausts, shaft drive, and Boxer-twin engine layout. Is this a deliberate policy born out of a desire to stand out from the crowd, or does BMW follow this path because you think it's the best way to engineer a motorcycle?

Good question. I must admit that it was always a wish for BMW to stand out, and if you look closely at our models or talk to Chief Designer David Robb you'll see that it is our aim to achieve this through [both] design and styling. But we think our products are not just emotional, but also rational at the same time. Take our security features, or environmental controls, or safety aspects—that's part of our philosophy, but we embody them in the same overall individual concept to create a package that we hope and believe has no counterpart in the marketplace. That's especially true of our styling, which we are proud to say is unconventional by the standards of other bikes. Look at our R1200C, for example. We regard styling as an integral part of the overall design—we don't engineer it first, then style it. But each model represents BMW's total concept of how to satisfy best the demands of that sector, and sometimes this goes away from the established design path, and introduces new engineering or styling features.

One such engineering feature from your history books, which we haven't yet seen on a BMW in the modern era, is the Kompressor. Yet supercharging has become an accepted route to add performance in the car world and is much more suited to motorcycle application than a turbo. Does BMW intend to reintroduce supercharging to the Boxer twin range?

We haven't taken any decision in that direction.

Have you considered it?

I would say it's part of the everyday work of my colleagues in the R&D department to consider every possible aspect of future design, and to decide which engine type, and which features, are best suited to its application. Then you have to decide if it's economically worthwhile to develop an engine using that particular feature just for one specific segment. The Kompressor engine is one possibility for the future.

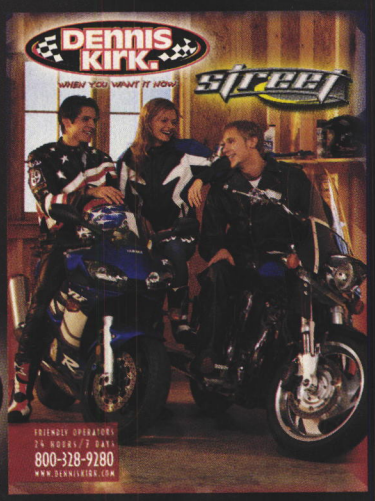
It might be a good way to celebrate BMW's 80th birthday next year!

(Laughs.) No comment....

The Kompressor issue underlines the fact that there is one model missing from BMW's lineup at the moment: a super-sport. This is surprising because of the performance image and sporting excellence of your automotive range, underlined by your successful involvement at the top of Formula 1 car racing. You already did think of this a decade ago when you designed the R1 desmo prototype Superbike, and took it a long way along the development path before scrapping it. Does BMW have any plans to return to this sector?

No, the super-sport sector is obviously an important market segment. But in looking at the typical super-sport customers, we have to ask ourselves, are these people really BMW customers? First, we know that the brand loyalty rate in this segment is really pretty low, and secondly, it's a very price-competitive segment. There are several examples where other firms have tried to enter this segment, but not very successfully. So we think that with the product range we have today, BMW is

GET MORE FROM DENNIS KIRK



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KEVIN WING

BMW's R1150GS has been among its top sellers since the R1100GS was introduced in 1995. It also marked a shift from the company's formerly stodgy styling into what can only be called nouveau-techno, a form BMW has followed into its "noncore" bikes such as the new F650CS street thumper.

well positioned in the overall motorcycle market; and given [the fact that] we have to finance ourselves from our own resources, it doesn't make sense economically speaking to go into such an area as the super-sport market.

This brings us to competition, to racing. You successfully competed in the Paris-Dakar in the 1980s, withdrew from desert rallies, then came back again to the Dakar Rally in the late '90s, won again, then stopped again after launching the F650GS street range on the back of that success. But you stopped after being blitzed by KTM in the '01 Dakar: Why pull out defeated?

When we returned to the Paris-Dakar, we thought that by doing so it might encourage other manufacturers to follow suit. In fact, the contrary happened, so that the only company we were competing against was KTM. The media coverage was also not very great, yet it cost us a great deal in terms of budget to take part. Apart from a little bit in France, Spain and Italy, it really wasn't covered well, not even here in Germany. So if you look at the amount of money you have to put in, and what you can take out, it really wasn't cost effective. So we withdrew.

"We regard styling as an integral part of the overall design—we don't engineer it first, then style it."

Was another reason for doing this so that you could devote that proportion of your promotional and R&D budget to another area, namely Grand Prix road racing?

(Smiles.) No, we decided to pull out of Paris-Dakar and invest the money in the Boxer Cup.

But is it true that, as reported, you have an agreement with Ing. Mauro Forghieri of Oral Engineering in Modena to develop a three-cylinder four-stroke MotoGP engine that will permit BMW to return to GP racing on two wheels as well as four?

We haven't taken any decision yet to go into GP1—we're just watching from the sidelines.

In that case, given that the majority of BMW's current sales are in Anglo-Saxon markets such as the United States and Northern Europe, where Superbike is king, is BMW considering entering this form of racing in the future with its added commercial spinoff potential?

I think you [have to] ask yourself, "Do you really need a product once you participate in GP1, for instance, which is derived directly from the race motorcycle, and to sell it afterward?" From that we come to the point that, as I said earlier, we don't have a super-sport product, and we're not planning to have one. Participating in GP sports doesn't automatically mean we must have a product derived from that—but once again, we have been quite successful over the past few years without participating in any form of roadracing, so we will need to have some good reasons to change that policy. We are absolutely convinced we can continue our growth by perhaps enlarging our existing product range without necessarily being present in the supersport category.

So no possibility to complete the lineup of cylinders and bring back a three-cylinder BMW sportbike?

No.

Formula 1 has raised BMW's image as a company once again—especially because you win! Would a comparable activity not be of benefit to BMW's motorcycle division?

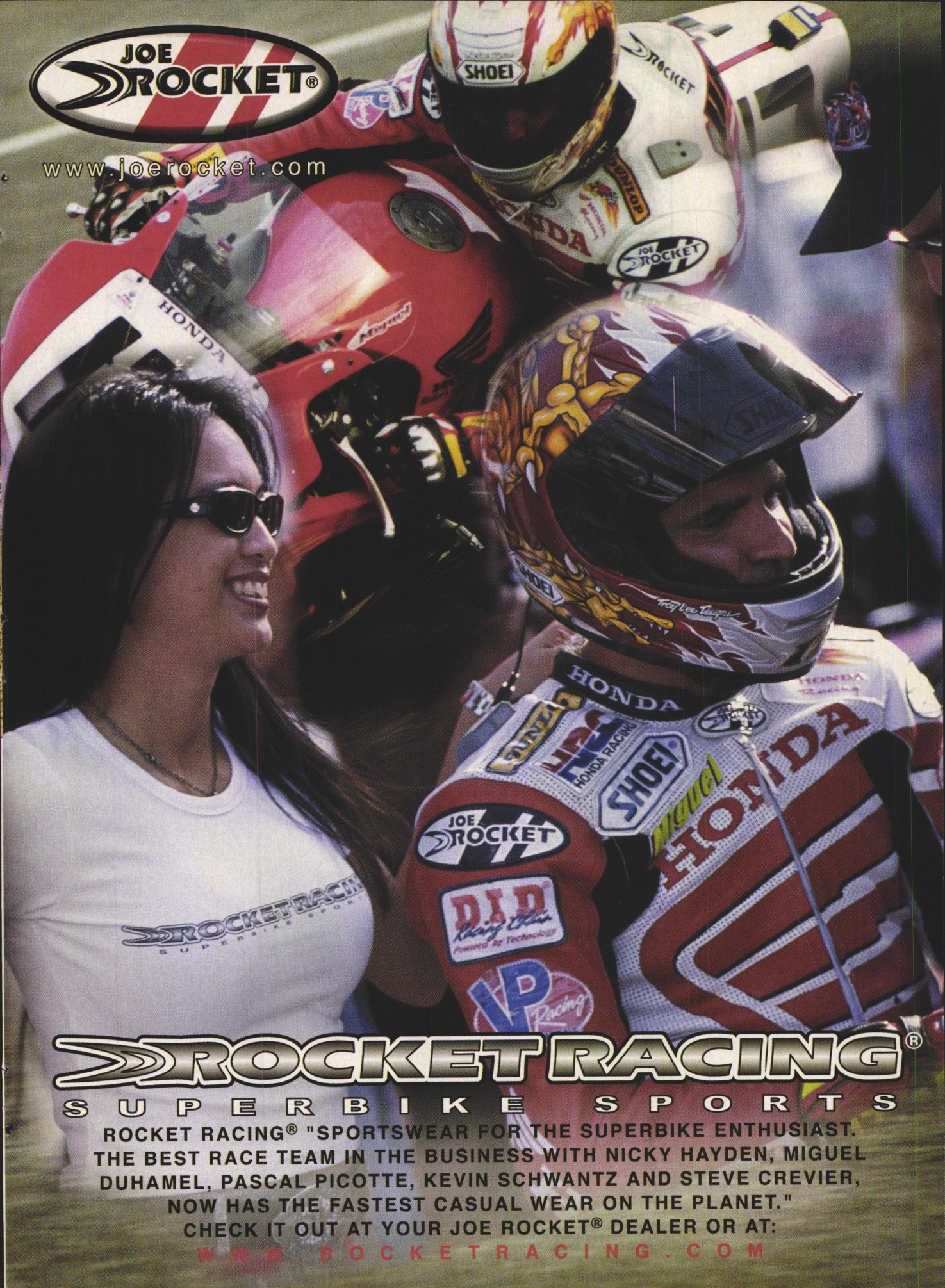
I think the success we have in Formula 1 is partly transferable to motorcycles—that's all I'll say!

You've been at the helm of BMW for six years. What is your greatest satisfaction during that time?

We substantially increased our market share very much against the trend during this period, thanks to the efforts of the very fine team of people at every level. But we managed at the same time to keep our feet on the ground, and to keep working to maintain that success by emphasising our capacity for innovative design, speeding up our development processes, responding better to our customers, and also maintaining the quality of our product. But we were also lucky, and a lot of our success has been due to the suppliers we work with. Like any customer, we're the first to complain to them when something goes wrong, but I want to thank them publicly for their fantastic support in helping us manufacture such fine motorcycles the market so evidently approves of.

Where do you see BMW Motorcycles going in the next 10 years? What is your strategic vision for the company?

We aim to be the leading premium motorcycle manufacturer in the world, having enlarged our share of the motorcycle market and increased our profitability in line with the expectations of BMW shareholders. We also intend to substantially increase our penetration of the North American market. MC



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MV Agusta F4 S

SHORT SHIFT

Sex at 13,000 rpm

By Tim Carrithers

Photos By Kevin Wing

THE BUILDUP TOOK NEARLY A DECADE. Back in the early 1990s, speculation about the rebirth of MV Agusta's legendary 750 fours begot various provocative sketches, the obligatory soft-focus spy photos and open slobbering among bevel-booted cognoscente everywhere. And rumors that Ferrari was in on the engine fueled the fire.

Finally, it appeared. Cagiva's Claudio Castiglioni and MV Grand Prix hero Giacomo Agostini unveiled the $37,000 750 F4 Series d'Oro at the '97 Milan show. Stunning as only Italian machinery can be, Massimo Tamburini's latest fusion of art and science sent the rest of the world's designers back to the drawing board.

As an *objet d'art*, an icon, a talisman, the $19,000 F4 Strada we tested in September of '00 was peerless. As a modern high-end sportbike its performance was good, if less than legendary. On roads crawling with hordes of impertinent, proletarian sportbikes, exclu-

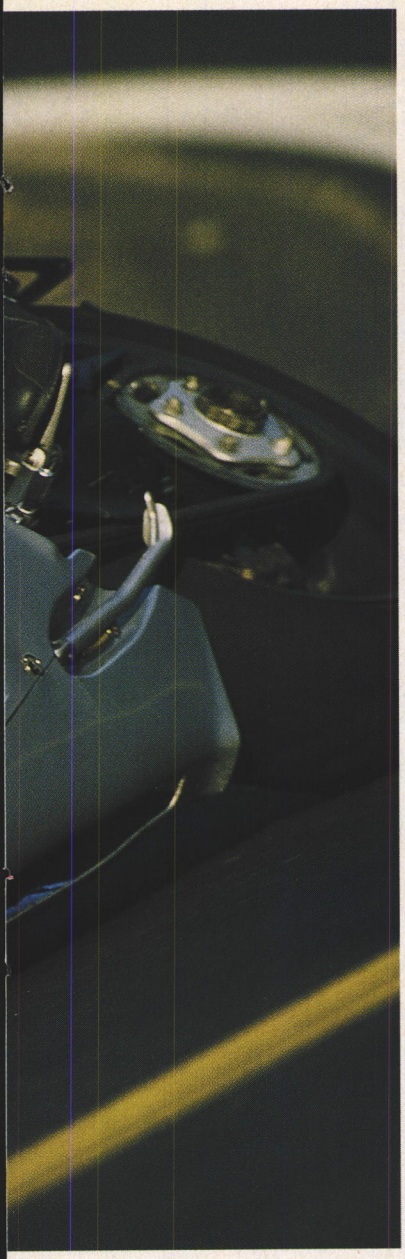
SHOEI

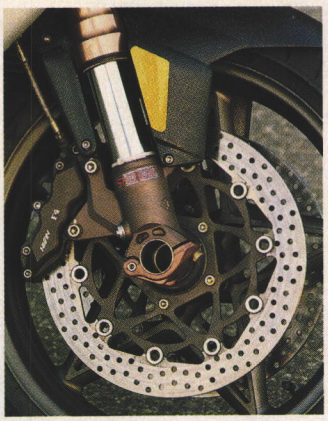
sivity and aristocratic bloodlines only go so far. So, how does MV keep the saliva flowing after all that initial commotion? More muscle would be a good start.

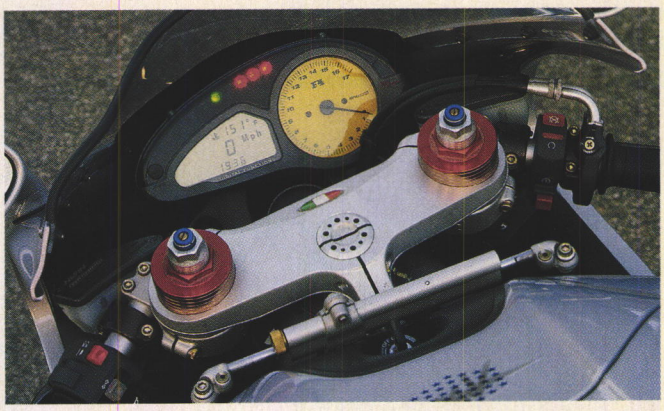
That's why MV engine maestro Andrea Goggi wrapped new combustion chambers around each cylinder's radial quartet of valves. New springs and lighter retainers let the engine rev to 13,900 rpm. Reshaped piston crowns, new cam profiles, 2.2 pounds shaved from the crankshaft, a lower (47/81) final-drive ratio and remapped fuel injection aim at building up a previously limp midrange power delivery. In theory, taller final-drive gearing (15/40 vs. 14/41) gives the new F4 more speed on top. Wet weight jumps five pounds to 485 pounds—59 heavier than the benchmark GSX-R750. The balance of Tamburini's art remains pure.

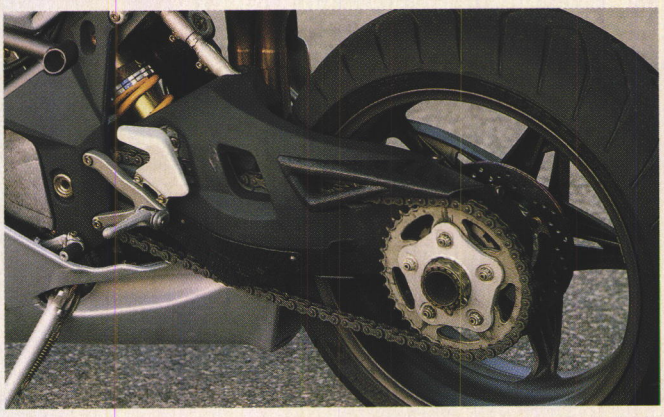
Compromise wasn't in the design brief. From the moment you part with the $18,995 admission price, this is a relationship based on commitment. Small enough to hide behind most 600s, the handlebars are lower and farther from the seat than any current sportbike we've tested. Ducati's 998 is comfortable compared with the F4 S. At 31 inches from the pavement, the predictably firm seat is nearly an inch taller than the GSX-R750s, barely enough room for our 35-inch inseam. Although MV offers the F4 S 1+1 with a sandwich-sized pillion, seating here is strictly solo. Like we said, it's all about commitment. You have to want it.

Make that 31-inch stretch to the bars and you learn a few things: The massaged Weber Marelli fuel injection makes the fortified four as civil as anything from Japan. The '02 tweaks more low-end power than last year, foreshadowing a 118.7-horsepower









Above: Six-pot Nissin-built calipers put smaller pistons toward the leading edge of the brake pads. The 49mm Showa fork locks a hollow axle in its sweet quick-release arrangement. Above, right: A chic instrument pod puts a lot of information into very little space. Middle, right: MV's patented single-sided swingarm is cast aluminum. Ride height is easily adjustable. Bottom, right: MV also offers a pillion-equipped F4 1+1 so you can listen to those pipes with a friend.

MV Agusta F4 S

PRICE	
MSRP	$18,995
ENGINE	
Type	liquid-cooled inline-four
Valve arrangement	dohc, 8v
Displacement	749cc
Transmission	6-speed
CHASSIS	
Weight	485 lb. (wet)
Fuel capacity	5.5 gal.
Wheelbase	55.0 in. (1398mm)
Seat height	31.1 in. (790mm)

peak at 12,500 rpm vs. 114.6. Still, opening the throttle below 6000 rpm delivers more intake honk than horsepower. While we're picking nits, slow-speed steering is heavy for a 485-pound motorcycle, and full-lock parking maneuvers can mash your thumbs faster than Don Vito Corleone. The MV gets a little cranky in traffic. The clutch gets grabby after a dozen traffic signals or so, and the exquisitely contoured muffler doubles as a seat heater.

A segue to 10,000 rpm through a fast set of corners and a tenor shriek from the pipe-organ exhaust system says the F4 is happy. Keep the tach between 9000 and 13,000 rpm and it's bloody euphoric, inhaling curvy pavement in one big hurry. Perhaps the sweetest transmission yet affixed to a motorcycle turns gear changes into a game. That's a good thing, because shifting is something you do a lot of. Settle into this 4000-rpm-wide world and the F4 says this is as good as 750 cubic-centimeters can get. Unfortunately, the real world contains GSX-R750s that disagree.

Through fast, sweeping corners, the F4's slot-car stability, grippy Pirelli Dragon Evo radials and effectively limitless cornering clearance permit as much speed and lean angle as your skill and personal sphincter calibration can tolerate. If cornering speed is the name of the game, you're looking at a major player. Still, this is a motorcycle that goes fast on its own rules, not yours. Carve your way through corners. No flicking. The F4 responds best to firm input, and not just through the bars. Weight that inside peg. Push the fuel tank with your outside knee. Relative to the average Japanese sportbike, it's like learning a new instrument. The tighter the road, the more effort it takes to make beautiful music together.

Having dialed up the right combination on the 49mm Showa fork and Sachs shock, the F4 delivers a firm, controlled ride. The six-pot Nissin front calipers and 310mm front rotors reward a strong squeeze with solid stopping power and admirable control, but wilt a tiny bit under merciless use. Halfway through a take-no-prisoners mountain descent, the brake lever on our bike came too close to the handlebar for our comfort.

We know what's coming next, so let's say it together: You can dang near buy two GSX-R750s for $19,000, either of which beats the MV like a gong in terms of pure performance. Nevertheless, as with most limited-production lust objects, there's more to life than brute force: A quart of Mad Dog will double your vision 3.5 times faster than a nice Brunello di Montalcino, '74. For those with the hard currency and expertise to appreciate it, the F4 S stands on its own two Pirellis as one of the most desirable sportbikes in the world. MC

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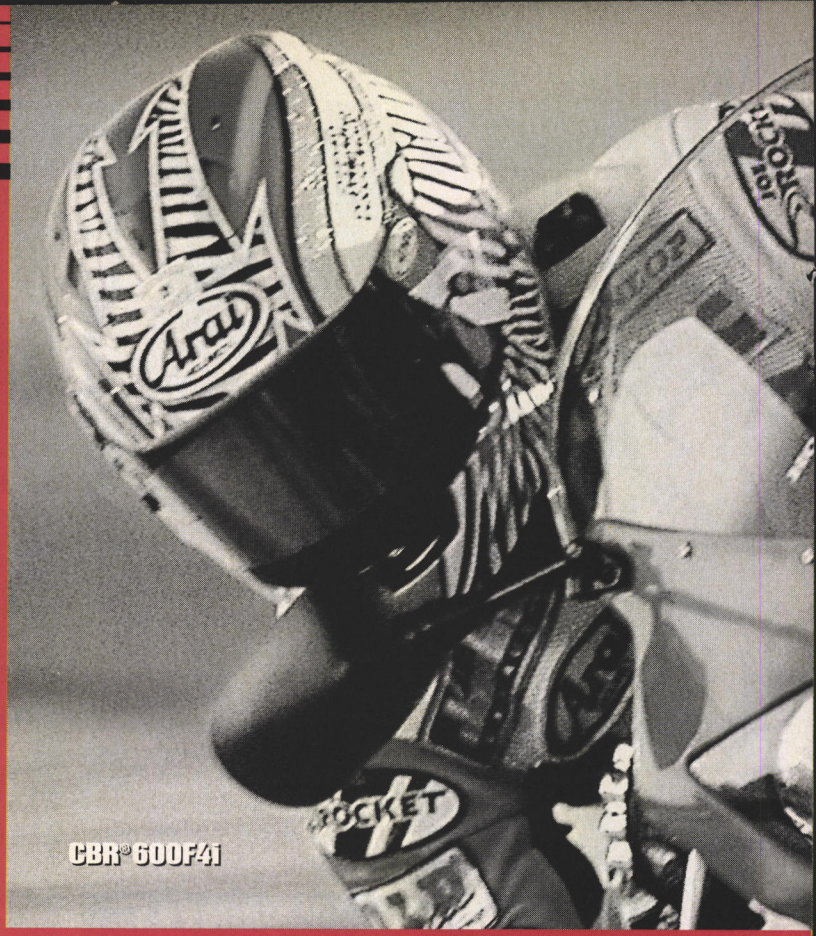

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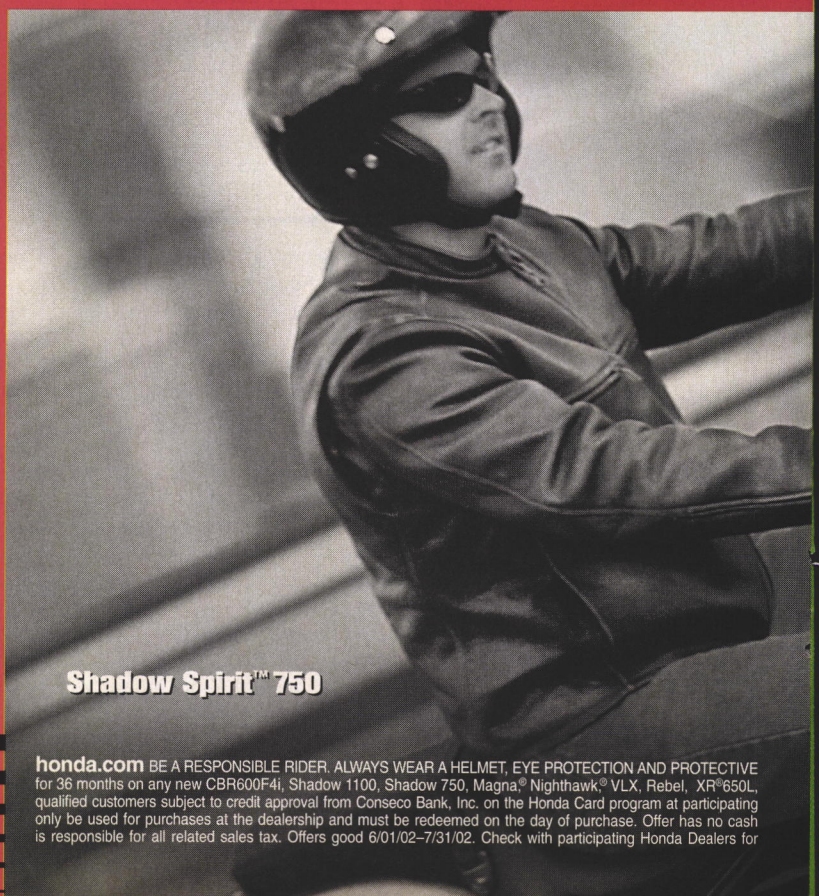
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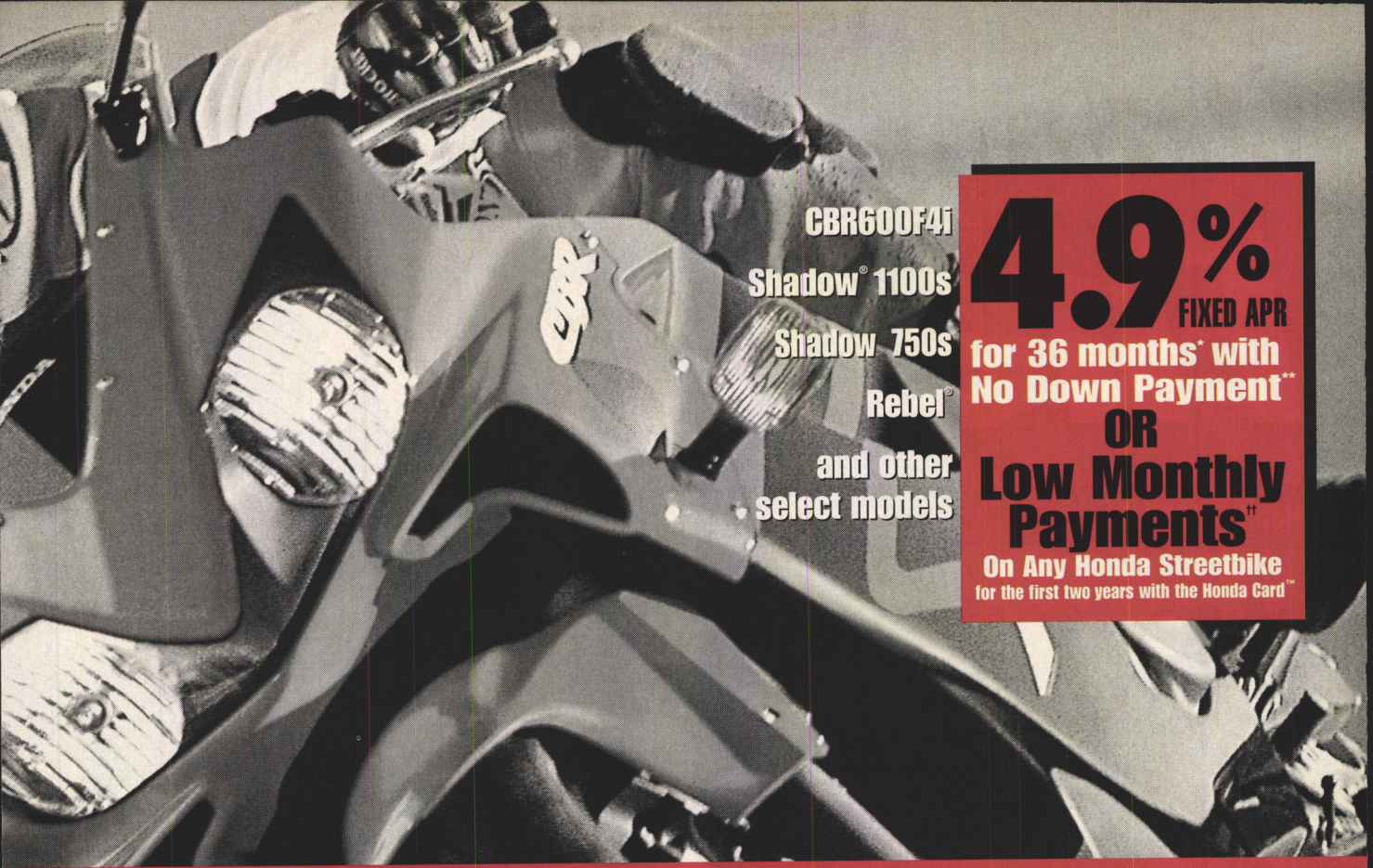

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Motopower Firehawk

Brothers in arms Mark Knopfler and Russell Savory build the ultimate street-going Honda CBR954RR. By Alan Cathcart. Photos By Kyoichi Nakamura

HONDA motopower Firehawk

WILD FILE

DIRE STRAITS FRONT man and rock-guitar virtuoso Mark Knopfler has two new part-time jobs to keep him busy while he recovers from a just-completed year-long solo world tour: race-team owner and builder of high-end, limited-edition specials based on Honda's new CBR954RR.

The race-team gig comes from his involvement with RS Performance, a highly successful British-based speed shop he bought an interest in a couple years ago from Russell Savory—the "RS" in RS Performance. (Although he doesn't care to publicize it particularly, Knopfler is a serious biker from way back; he rides almost daily, and has for a quarter century.) Now called Motopower, the Knopfler/Savory firm is back in the British Superbike championship (BSB) with a two-man team running the only Honda CBR954RRs at the front of the field in the restructured series, which this year matches World Superbike-spec 1000cc twins and 750cc fours against less heavily tuned but equally powerful 1000cc four-cylinder hypersports. Think of it as a preview to the one-liter rule coming to SBK in 2004.

And the ultratrick, CBR-based, high-end specials I just mentioned? They're a direct product of the Motopower team's racing exploits, of course. Called the Firehawk, the street-legal spinoff Savory has created is a true racebike with lights, a 180-horsepower rocket that's now entering limited production at a price of $16,855. Seventy-five examples will be produced, with the first six handmade units already spoken for. For this you not only get the CBR, but also a Motopower Team membership package, which gives customers upper-crust access to team riders and hospitality at every round of the '02 British Superbike series. Nice.

Motopower/RS has plenty of experience constructing limited-edition Hondas with big-league performance. Witness the 30 examples of the 144-horsepower EvoBlade it built three years ago with the approval of Honda Britain as an effective counter to the extra performance of the then-new Yamaha YZF-R1. The beautiful little CBR600 Evo RR (*Motorcyclist*, June '00) came next, and was followed by a series of limited-edition sportbikes Honda Britain marketed to celebrate the company's 50th birthday, as well as the 25 Joey Dunlop Memorial RC51s built last winter, all of which were spoken for within 14 days of going on sale. No surprise, then, that CBR-RR guru Tadao Baba is a frequent visitor to Motopower's headquarters, and has watched and assisted the goings-on for years. (Maybe they should get Baba-san to sign the fuel tanks of the Firehawks, and call it the BabaBlade….)

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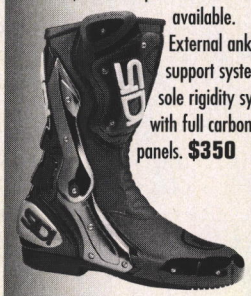

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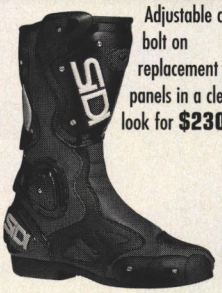
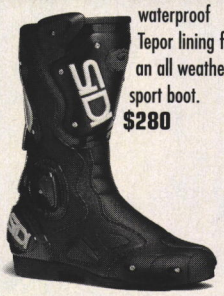
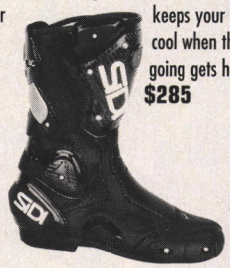


Vertebra 2 Tepor: Take a standard Vertebra 2 and add a waterproof Tepor lining for an all weather sport boot. **$280**



Vertebra 2 Air: All the features of the Vertebra 2 plus air conditioning! Perforated Lorica shell keeps your feet cool when the going gets hot. **$285**



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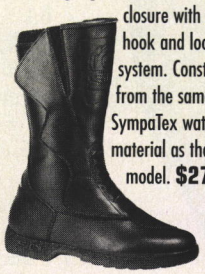

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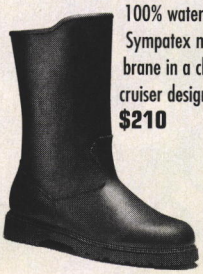

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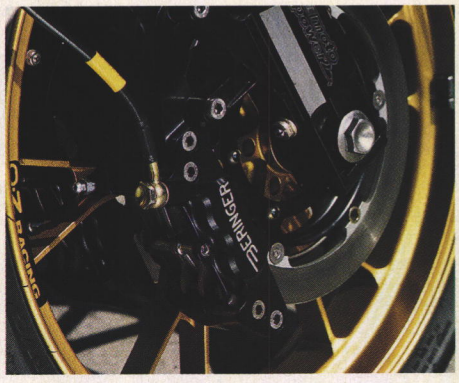
Above: Stripped bare, the Firehawk looks a *lot* like a 600 on steroids, though one with nearly 180 horsepower. Below, left: The cockpit is standard 954RR fare, albeit with a trick steering damper and master cylinder. Below, center: Beringer brakes look weak, act strong—and they're lighter, too. Below, right: No chance of dragging *that* canister, eh?



One thing's for sure, the Motopower CBR is a rocket. The Firehawk I spent a sunny English day aboard delivers 178 hp to the rear wheel at 13,000 rpm—quite an improvement over a stock '02 'Blade's numbers of 134 hp at 11,000 rpm, measured on the same Motopower dyno. All this power hasn't been obtained at the expense of midrange, either; peak torque goes from 74 foot-pounds at 9200 rpm on the stocker to 83 foot-pounds at 9000 rpm on the Firehawk. I did manage to locate the Firehawk's rev-limiter at 14,200 rpm, stratospherically high for a 954cc inline-four streetbike motor with 75mm x 54mm dimensions. Customer versions will be dialed back a bit to just 13,500 rpm, 1700 rpm more than the stock CBR. This tells you plainly that this is a serious piece of kit.

The explanation for the bike's stunning power is fairly simple: Savory and company have taken their highly competitive RaceBlade racebike motor and transplanted it into the street-going Firehawk chassis. Although BSB rules mandate that crankshaft, pistons, rods, valves and cylinders must remain stock, the actual design may be altered, and cylinder-head work is permitted—which means camshafts, compression ratio, valve timing, airbox and exhaust can all be substantially reworked.

"Knowing [the 954] engine was coming," Savory says, "we started development work back in August of last year. But the new cases came on line in December and are a vital ingredient in getting extra power and rpm, because there's extra webbing to make them much stronger; we wouldn't be able to make them hold together and produce this kind of power reliably without that. The new engine also has oil jets that squirt up from the bottom of the cases rather than through the conrods, which makes them stronger, too, plus the fuel injectors are a 12-hole design rather than a four-hole, which adds greatly to driveability. Also, throttle-body diameter has gone up from 40mm to 42mm, for more power. The whole engine is lighter than before, and that includes the pistons, which helps

One thing's for sure, the Motopower CBR is a rocket. The Firehawk I spent a sunny English day aboard delivers 178 hp to the rear wheel....

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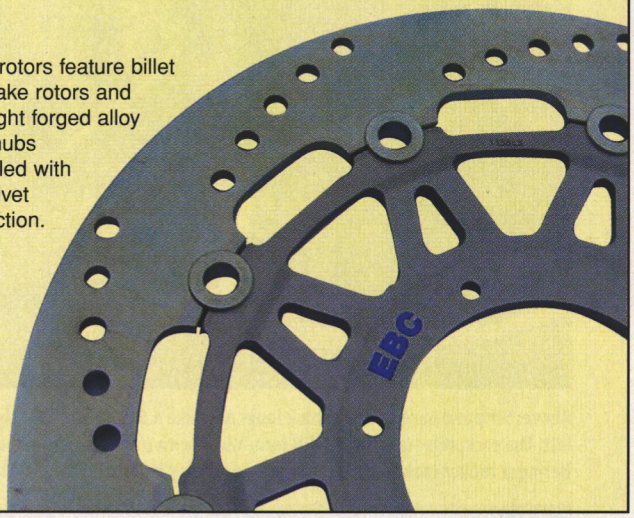

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Right: Motopower's Russell Savory is arguably one of the most successful race-tuner/builders in Europe, which helps explain why 'Blade project leader Tadao Baba is such a frequent visitor to Savory's shop.

Below: Although the Motopower team isn't in contention for the BSB championship, riders Gary Mason (shown) and Matt Llewellyn have put in some outstanding rides in 2002.

with extra revs, plus the balance factor of the crank has been altered to also lighten it. That's all stuff Honda did, which gave us a platform to develop the Firehawk from: We just took maximum advantage of all the good engineering improvements they made on the bike for '02, even if it still isn't possible to bore it right out to a full 1000cc...there's not enough meat between the cylinder bores to do so."

According to Savory, blueprinting the bottom half of the engine to remove the inconsistencies of mass production is key. "The crux of the matter is to make sure the cylinder bores are perfectly round, and the crank-bearing clearances correct; we run with a slightly tighter clearance on the two end bearings than we do in the middle of the crank so the center bearing runs a bigger clearance," he explains. "This is because the crankshaft moves around fractionally at high rpm—and we've run this engine at 15,000 rpm quite safely, with stock pistons, rods, valves and bearings. It's well made, but you have to put it together properly, and believe it or not, it takes two days of work just to line the crankcases up right. And if you don't, it won't last; you'll wear the bearings out, and it'll lose revs. Getting the bottom end right is the crucial part of the whole job."

Savory then turns his attention to the cylinder head, which is ported and flowed, then fitted with Motopower's own camshafts, which have more lift and duration. Because BSB rules stipulate stock camshaft lift, the ones in the streetbike are therefore more radical than those in Motopower's own racebikes, and while they operate standard-sized valves, these are now stronger, lighter one-piece units with lighter, stiffer springs some 4mm shorter than stock. The head has been skimmed to raise compression with the stock pistons by one point to 12.5:1, so it still runs happily on super-unleaded pump gas, though that wasn't the main reason for being relatively conservative, Savory says. "You mustn't go too far in raising the compression," he says. "Otherwise you put too much pressure on the bearings and it becomes unreliable. It's best to make a happy compromise."

A significant degree of extra performance comes from the ram-air induction system Savory has fitted to the modified stock Honda airbox, with twin ducts on either side of the headlamp that necessitate a small amount of front-end restyling. Unable to obtain Honda's access codes to the engine-management system, Savory has therefore replaced the Honda ECU with a programmable one developed in Britain by Silverstone-based RaceTech Developments (RTD), another Formula 1 supplier. In conjunction with the glorious-sounding Lazer exhaust, the remapped EFI has permitted Motopower to considerably reduce the length of the throttle-body trumpets/intake stacks, promoting more top-end power while at the same time also increasing it down low via the altered fuel and ignition map—the best of both worlds.

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(209) 529-5424

Temecula Kawasaki
Murrieta
(909) 698-4123

South Bay Kawasaki
National City
(619) 420-2300

Kawasaki Of Oakland
Oakland
(510) 532-3677

Kawasaki Of Oceanside
Oceanside
(760) 433-5464

Mid Cities Kawasaki
Paramount
(562) 531-1225

G & B Kawasaki
Petaluma
(707) 763-4658

Kawasaki Motorsport Warehouse
Poway
(858) 513-2444

Lee's Kawasaki
Redding
(530) 221-6788

Del Amo Kawasaki
Redondo Beach
(310) 372-8891

Kawasaki Of Riverside
Riverside
(909) 683-8839

Roseville Kawasaki
Roseville
(916) 782-2171

Goodtimes Kawasaki
Sacramento
(916) 344-2141

Chaparral Kawasaki
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(909) 889-2761

Fun Bike Center
San Diego
(858) 278-6635

House Of Kawasaki
San Diego
(619) 229-7700

Golden Gate Cycles Kawasaki
San Francisco
(415) 771-4535

Temple City Kawasaki
San Gabriel
(626) 287-6167

San Luis Kawasaki
San Luis Obispo
(805) 541-2200

Tag Motorsports Kawasaki
Santa Ana
(714) 258-3311

Grand Prix Kawasaki
Santa Clara
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All American Kawasaki
Santa Cruz
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North Bay Kawasaki
Santa Rosa
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Saugus Kawasaki
Saugus
(661) 254-2929

Kawasaki Of Monterey Peninsula
Seaside
(831) 899-7433

Kawasaki Of Putnam
Putnam
(860) 928-7565

Midtown Kawasaki
Rocky Hill
(860) 721-0193

Central Sports
Taftville
(860) 886-2407

DELAWARE

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Dover
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Track And Trail
New Castle
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FLORIDA

Action Jet Sports Kawasaki
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Team Savage Kawasaki
Clearwater
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Delray Kawasaki
Delray Beach
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Kawasaki Of Fort Myers
Fort Myers
(941) 275-5535

Treasure Coast Kawasaki
Fort Pierce
(561) 464-6385

Streit's Kawasaki
Gainesville
(352) 376-2637

Palmetto Kawasaki
Hialeah
(305) 557-1311

Daytona Fun Machines Kawasaki
Holly Hill
(386) 238-0888

Citrus Kawasaki
Inverness
(352) 726-6676

Jacksonville Powersports
Jacksonville
(904) 641-5320

Kawasaki Key West
Key West
(305) 294-5551

Kawasaki Of Lake Wales
Lake Wales
(863) 676-2245

Lakeland Kawasaki
Lakeland
(863) 688-3333

Cycle World Kawasaki
Lantana
(561) 540-6055

Seminole Kawasaki
Longwood
(407) 322-3253

Kawasaki Of Merritt Island
Merritt Island
(321) 452-0066

Gables Kawasaki
Miami
(305) 266-8300

Kawasaki Of Cutler Ridge
Miami
(305) 258-2000

Kawasaki Of Naples
Naples
(941) 594-5535

Kawasaki Of Miami
North Miami
(305) 956-9965

Ocala Motorsports & Kawasaki
Ocala
(352) 732-8531

Cycle Sport Center
Orlando
(407) 299-9191

Orlando Kawasaki
Orlando
(407) 273-3579

Rose Kawasaki
Rossville
(706) 861-3954

Kawasaki Motor World
Roswell
(770) 664-0820

Beasley Kawasaki
Savannah
(912) 234-6446

Bellamy Motor Sports Kawasaki
Swainsboro
(478) 237-2004

Deep South Cycle & Power Equipment
Thomasville
(229) 228-7999

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Boise
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Grizzly Sports Kawasaki
Caldwell
(208) 454-8508

Kawasaki Of Coeur d'Alene
Coeur d'Alene
(208) 667-3571

Action Cycles Kawasaki
Twin Falls
(208) 736-8118

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Hammertime Kawasaki
Belvidere
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Sportland Kawasaki
Bloomington
(309) 662-0508

Champion Cycle Center
Chicago
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The Great Escape
Crystal Lake
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Tuf Kawasaki
Dekalb
(815) 756-3588

Des Plaines Kawasaki
Des Plaines
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DGY Motorsports Kawasaki
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Steier's Kawasaki
Elgin
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Freeport
(815) 235-7549

McGinley Kawasaki
Highland
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Woodfield Motorsports Kawasaki
Hoffman Estates
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Nielsen Enterprises
Lake Villa
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Banzai Motorsports Kawasaki
Libertyville
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Litchfield
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Lombard Kawasaki
Lombard
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Oswego
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C & C Custom Cycle
Chariton
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Decorah
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Struthers Brothers Kawasaki
Des Moines
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Sindt Kawasaki
Dubuque
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Racing Unlimited Kawasaki
Fort Dodge
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Iowa City
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Becker Kawasaki
Garden City
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Dan's Kawasaki
Hesston
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Salina Motorsports Kawasaki
Salina
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Shawnee Kawasaki
Shawnee
(913) 631-1111

Topeka Powersports Kawasaki
Topeka
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Motorsports Kawasaki
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Adventure Sports Kawasaki
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Florence
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Lee's Kawasaki
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Nicholasville
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Owensboro
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Kawasaki Of Pikeville
Pikeville
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Kawasaki Of Richmond
Richmond
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Caro
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Cement City
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Comstock Park
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Eastpointe
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Gaylord Kawasaki
Gaylord
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Hancock
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Howell Cycle
Howell
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M & M Cycle
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Lincoln Park
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Marion
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Holiday Kawasaki
Michigan Center
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Ray's Kawasaki
Monroe
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Ridgeland
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Tupelo
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Bolivar
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Ferguson
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Independence
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Liberty
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Rolla
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Springfield
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St. Charles
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Kawasaki Of St. Louis
St. Louis
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Warrensburg
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West Plains
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Billings
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Big Sky Kawasaki
Missoula
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Kawasaki Motorsports Unlimited
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Lincoln
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Stevens Motor Sports
Omaha
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Michael's Kawasaki
Carson City
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Desert Motorsports Kawasaki
Las Vegas
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Woodbury Kawasaki
Woodbury Heights
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Southwest Kawasaki
Alamogordo
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Kawasaki Of Albuquerque
Albuquerque
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R & S Kawasaki
Albuquerque
(505) 292-6692

R & S Kawasaki
Albuquerque
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Las Cruces Motorsports Kawasaki
Las Cruces
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King Cycle Kawasaki
Brooklyn
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Cobleskill
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Commack
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Fly Creek
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Freeport
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Fulton
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Haverstraw
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Kenmore
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Marlboro
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Cycle Motion Kawasaki
Middletown
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Millwood
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Camrod
New York
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Ithaca Recreation Sports Kawasaki
Newfield
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Fun Factory Kawasaki
Grand Fork
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Minot
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Arnie's Motorcycle Sales
Williston
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Canton
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Cycle Specialties Kawasaki
Cincinnati
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Stu Fine Kawasaki
Cincinnati
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Classic Cycles
Columbus
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Kawasaki Vista
Dayton
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Kennedy's Kawasaki Sport Cycle
Elyria
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Franklin
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A S K
Grove City
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A S K
Lancaster
(740) 654-3456

Hinds Kawasaki
Lewis Center
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Goodtime Powersports Kawasaki
Maple Heights
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Big 4 Kawasaki
Marietta
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J & J Motors
Massillon
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Mentor Kawasaki
Mentor
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Mid-Ohio Kawasaki
Mt. Vernon
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Andrews Kawasaki
Salem
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Uniontown
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Upper Sandusky
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Alex Cycle Shop
Warren
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Altus
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Grand Motor Kawasaki
Grove
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Keystone Kawasaki
Duncansville
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Blackman's Kawasaki
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Cycle City Of Erie
Erie
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Roxy's Kawasaki
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Harry's Kawasaki Sales & Service
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Larry's Sport Center Kawasaki
Galeton
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Harrisburg
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Montgomeryville Cycle Center
Hatfield
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Honesdale
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Indiana
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Kawasaki Of Latrobe
Latrobe
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Lewistown
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Lititz
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Montoursville
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Sanders Kawasaki
New Castle
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Bob Thomas' Kawasaki
North Huntingdon
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Leisure Equipment
Parker Ford
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Cycle Max Kawasaki
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Kawasaki Of Philadelphia
Philadelphia
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Kawasaki House
Pittsburgh
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Scranton
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Selinsgrove
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World Of Wheels
Seneca
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Kissell's Kawasaki
State College
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Gatto Kawasaki
Tarentum
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Michael Andretti Kawasaki
Temple
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Crossroad Powersports Kawasaki
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Kawasaki Of Tullahoma
Tullahoma
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Abilene
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David Browns Sport Center
Amarillo
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Goe Kawasaki
Angleton
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D & S Cycle-Kawasaki
Arlington
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Woods Kawasaki Fun Center
Austin
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Kawasaki Country
Beaumont
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Carrollton
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Corpus Christi
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Outdoor Wise Kawasaki
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Kawasaki Cycle Center
Denton
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Granprix Kawasaki
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Kawasaki West
Fort Worth
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Gainesville Kawasaki
Gainesville
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Garland
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Extreme Outdoor Kawasaki
Georgetown
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Granbury Motorsports Kawasaki
Granbury
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Grapevine Kawasaki
Grapevine
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Impact Kawasaki
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Danner's Cycle Sales
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Highlands Kawasaki
Highlands
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A.J. Foyt Kawasaki
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Houston Kawasaki
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Kawasaki City
Irving
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Wild West Kawasaki
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Kawasaki City Of Dallas
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(972) 228-3772

Z-Team Power Sports Kawasaki
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Valley Kawasaki
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Manassas Kawasaki
Manassas
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Casey Cycle City
Newport News
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Sunrise Kawasaki
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Ultimate Cycle Kawasaki
Richmond
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Rhoads Cycles
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Cycle World Kawasaki
Virginia Beach
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Wayne Cycle Kawasaki
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Valley Kawasaki
Winchester
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Motorcycle Factory Kawasaki
Woodbridge
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WASHINGTON

Bellevue Kawasaki
Bellevue
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Cliff's Cycle Center
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Enumclaw
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Shumate Kawasaki
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Kent Kawasaki
Kent
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Lynnwood Kawasaki
Lynnwood
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Port Angeles Kawasaki
Port Angeles
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Puyallup Power Sports Kawasaki
Puyallup
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Lake City Kawasaki
Seattle
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Wenatchee Cycle Center
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Bakersfield
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Burbank Kawasaki
Burbank
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Simi Valley
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Colorado Springs
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Rocky Mountain Cycle Plaza Kawasaki
Colorado Springs
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Englewood
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Florence
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I-25 Powersports Kawasaki
Fort Collins
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Paradise Kawasaki
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Groton
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Cycle Performance
Litchfield
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New Milford
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Plainfield
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Panama City
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John Kiley's Kawasaki
Pensacola
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Pompano Beach
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Port Charlotte
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MICHELIN

déjà view continued from page 17

ing in every direction, injuring 19.

Perhaps, the alpha-dog theory has merit. And it certainly suggests an animalistic side of OMGs in that, much like wolves, for instance, they are highly structured and hierarchically organized social systems with fierce loyalties. The OMGs may kick much of conventional society's restrictions rudely and squarely in the face, but internally they are anything but informal in the defining and enforcement of their own laws and rules.

There are presidents, vice presidents and secretary treasurers at national and chapter levels. There is a national enforcer whose duties include the retrieval of their colors (jackets with club insignia) from former members and on occasion the removal of tattoos (one can only speculate on the erasing methods employed). There is a

...motorcycle gangs have undergone considerable expansion in recent years.

sergeant at arms to maintain order at meetings, because even OMG leadership recognizes that members are prone to disruptive behavior, regardless of setting. Road captains are just what the title suggests, keeping things humming along in terms of logistics and communications (including with the authorities) during runs and at rallies. Newbies pay dues and only become members after a lengthy probationary period, submitting to rites of initiation, and being voted in. There exists some rather arcane protocol that must really test the tact of the inexperienced—lock up your bike and secure your belongings and you'll likely be treated to an unforgettable lesson in proper club etiquette. Colors are restricted and protected with a zeal that is difficult to fathom, and with procedures that would make the fiercest corporate lawyer's cease-and-desist letter look like so much saber rattling.

One might be inclined to dismiss this faction of the motorcycling community as aberrant and dangerous and, most of all, worthy only of being ignored; simply keep your distance from this unsavory and menacing 1 percent group, gang, club or whatever you wish to call it.

It's not so simple.

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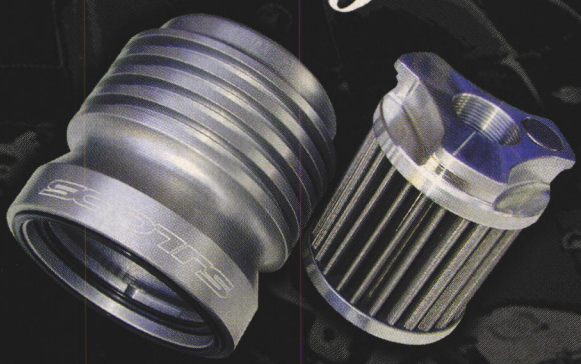

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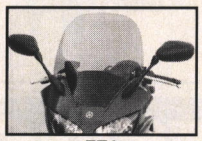

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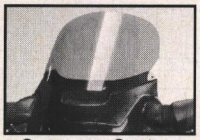

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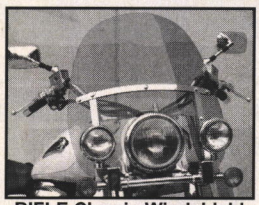

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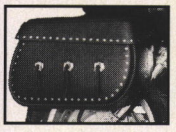

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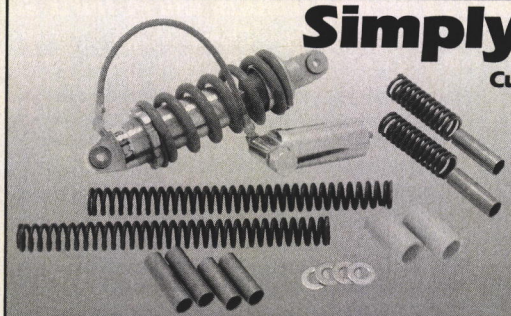

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déjà view

motorcycle manufacturers have shown little reluctance by providing an abundance of machinery, accessories and garb to match. It is now impossible to speak logically in terms of 1 percent and 99 percent. It is equally impossible to employ the term biker in a definitive way. The lines so clearly drawn in the past seem substantially blurred. Perhaps, there exists now a 10 percent biker.

The incident in Laughlin seems to indicate an intermingling of real biker (OMG member) and not-so-real biker (independent biker, as he refers to himself). There are even women bikers and biker children. The annual River Run at Laughlin was an event that had been going on peacefully for 20 years. The popularly held belief is the members of OMGs want nothing to do with events of the type, including more major ones such as Daytona Bike Week and Sturgis, and they detest independent bikers as poseurs with no real understanding or conviction of what it means to be a biker. And it's commonly supposed that should a real biker and a poseur biker wind up on the same piece of real estate, the former will dramatically and painfully broaden the latter's understanding by way of a lesson administered with real conviction. So, why were the Mongols at Harrah's in the first place? Why did the Hells Angels take their grievances inside the casino? There is a posted dialogue on Hells Angels founder Sonny Barger's Web site (www.sonnybarger.com) that goes some way toward clarifying the situation, and what we should make of it. Yet, it leaves a lot unanswered.

The biker scene is complex and difficult to decode, riddled as it is with far-ranging theories, distortions, and no small amount of media sensationalism and Hollywood exploitation. It is also clearly changing, in part because the world is changing. The Internet alone illustrates how some things have changed. Three of the Big Four OMGs have Web sites, as do countless others, and not just rudimentary ones. Who could have ever imagined such sophistication in the early days? Did the prototypical Hells Angels distribute full-color brochures in those days, complete with games and schedules of events such as Bike Week and Sturgis? Of course, like the rest of us, the members of OMGs have aged, many are grandfathers with paternal concerns, including Barger himself. Are the outlaw motorcycle gangs transforming into a kinder, gentler society of motorcycle enthusiasts? It sure didn't look that way in Laughlin. Stay tuned…perhaps I'll take just a peek into the abyss.

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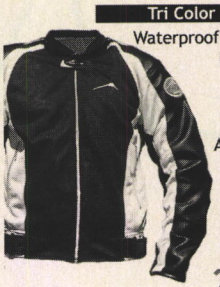

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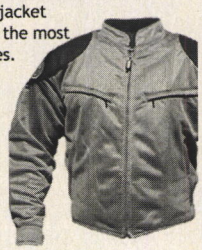

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backfires

continued from page 21

supercharged 406 small-block Chevrolet in an S10 Blazer) think motorcycles are slug cruisers or big heavy touring rigs that are easily dusted. I had to get shot down, not once but twice, by a Kawasaki ZX-9R a few years ago to find out the difference myself. I now ride a 1999 ZX-11. I'm 58 years old and it makes a nice old guy's sportbike.

Ron Haugen
Mobile, AL

It makes a nice 30-something's sportbike, too, Haugen! —Ed.

It's obvious to me that Hulderman's rebuttal to the "Car vs. Bike Smackdown" was a brilliant deduction using zero brainology, apparently his major subject in his so-called engineering school. If he's an engineer, I'm Bill Clinton!

Jimmy Cross
Pittsburg, OK

IT'S A GIRL THING

Thanks for the "Female Fashion" blurb in your May issue's Gear Box section. It's nice to know there's a company (Teknic) out there that's producing a line of clothing for women. You can bet I will follow up on the Venom line.

Judie Mantel
Menomonee Falls, WI

There are actually plenty of companies making women-specific riding gear, Mantel; take a look, and you'll be surprised.—Ed.

I'm a 15-year-old female and would just like to comment on your magazine. Ever since I can remember I would read my dad's *Motorcyclist* issues, even the old ones. I still do, in fact. I know you're probably thinking, "Wouldn't she rather be at the mall, or painting her nails?" But I'd really rather be hangin' out with my dad ridin' motorcycles. I am a bit of a tomboy, but that's beside the point. I just thought I'd let you know that it's not only men who enjoy your magazine. Keep up the good work.

Shannon Gibbs
Dundee, NY

SOOO BUTCH

Sooo butch eh? Whatever turns you on, Cook. A rather unfortunate label to hang on a real macho bike, don't you think? Still, I enjoyed the article, even though you didn't mention some of the other useful upgrades for globetrotters: the Adventure's crash bars, headlight/turn-signal grilles and the heavier gauge sump/skid plate. Many can be bolted onto the regular R-GS. I just bought a new R1150GS (my 19th bike) and it's a real eye-opener. I'm having *sooo* much fun!

Bob Tomlin
Via e-mail

Cook replies: So which one of the Village People do you fear the most?

CRASH AND LEARN

First Greg McQuide, then we almost lose Josh Norem. Although I'm a two-wheeled novice, every day I ride I feel more confident and more relaxed. But stories like

Norem checks out the menu....

JAMES BROWN

Norem's make me wonder if the risks are worth the thrills, especially with all the knuckleheads out there. Norem says he knows no one else will learn from his tragedy, but he's wrong. From now on I will make sure cross traffic is stopped completely before heading into an intersection, something I never did before.

John Baransky
Via e-mail

SOFT BUTTS?

Have you read *Rider* magazine's test of the new Kawasaki ZZ-R1200? After reading theirs and yours I have to wonder if you rode the same bike! You guys loved it, while they said they'd need aspirin and a hot tub after a day in the saddle.

Tom Roth
Dayton, OH

It's true that Dexter Ford's ass qualifies for a Rockwell number...but we all *liked it (except Carrithers, who arrived late to the party).—Ed.*

We appreciate your views and opinions. Send letters to BACKFIRES, *Motorcyclist*, 6420 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90048-5515, or fax them to (323) 782-2372. If you have Internet access, you can e-mail your thoughts to us at mcmail@primedia.com. Letters must be signed and include your address and telephone number; however, we will withhold your name at your request. We reserve the right to edit letters for clarity and/or length. The views expressed here are not necessarily those of *Motorcyclist*. All materials sent to the editors will become the property of *Motorcyclist* and cannot be returned.

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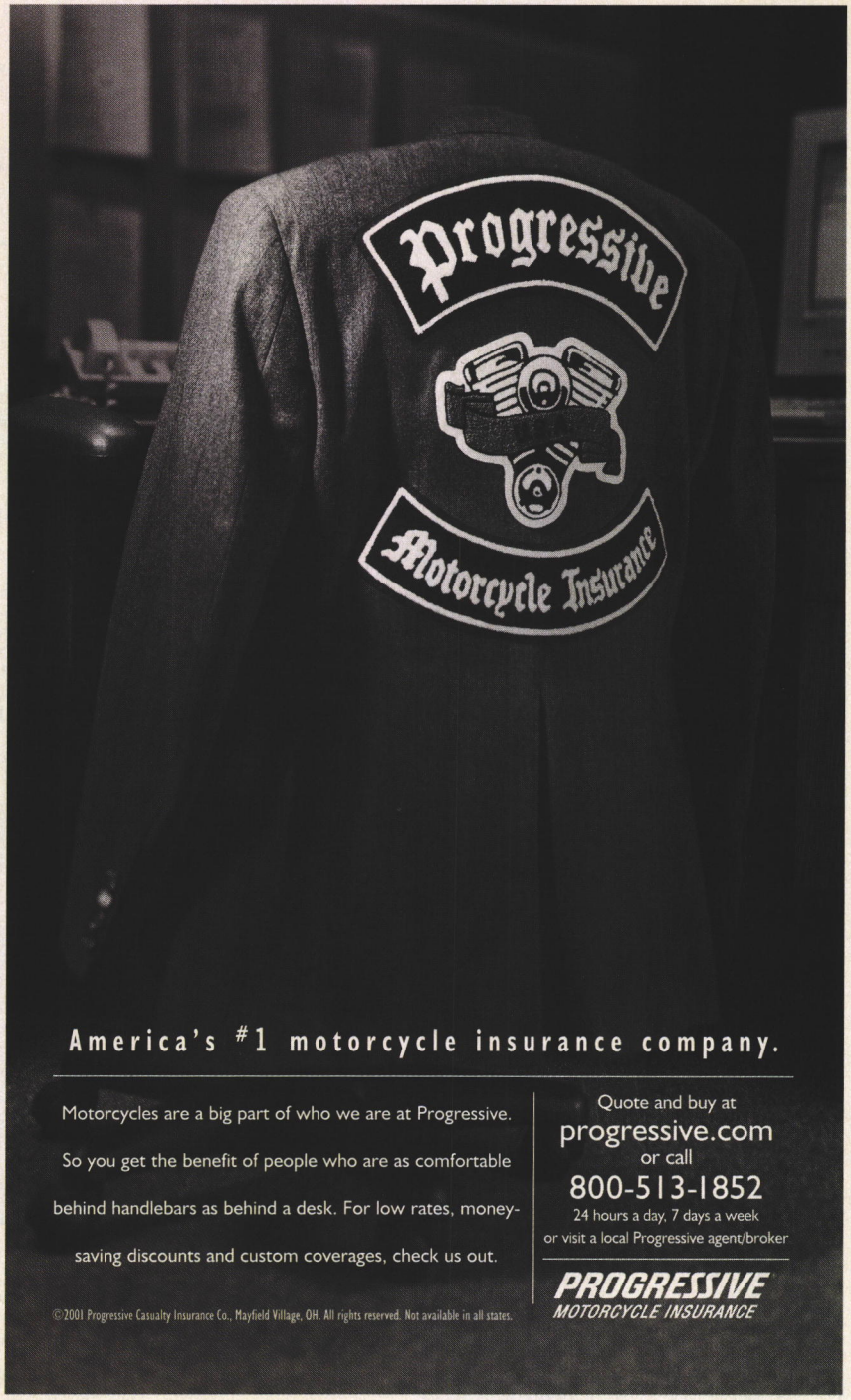

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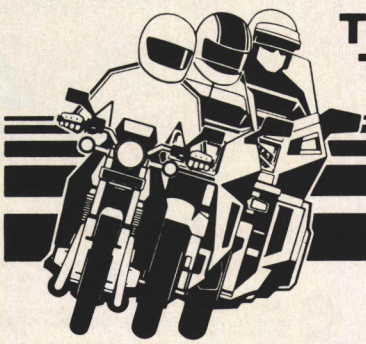

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Penske internals, there's a WP race shock on the rear connected via a modified link to the polished stock swingarm, and the beautiful anodized OZ wheels made in Italy to Motopower's design are forged rather than cast, each saving four pounds compared with stock—a significant savings in all-important unsprung weight.

The test bike I rode was fitted with another Motopower option: A distinctive Beringer front brake setup, which sees four small-diameter 210mm steel discs mounted in pairs on either side, gripped by the French company's own four-piston calipers, with an extra brake pad between the two discs to give added bite in company with the Goodridge braided hoses. Compared with the CBR's massive 330mm stock discs, the Beringers offer a substantial reduction in gyroscopic mass, in turn lightening the steering and allowing the bike to turn faster.

All of which I immediately discovered during the first five miles of switchback country roads as I left Motopower's factory.

I've never ridden a street-legal Superbike that had such endless reserves of power....

The first thing you notice riding the bike isn't the mega-powerful engine, but rather the way the '02 Fireblade chassis package feels smaller and more agile compared with the older CBR900RR family of bikes. Given that steering geometry is unchanged, the difference must lie in the Beringer brakes and lighter OZ wheels. It's not that you catch yourself oversteering into turns, but that the bike is so much easier than even the latest CBR-RR to flick side to side. And that's saying something, as the 954 is a quick tool indeed.

While I didn't feel the Beringers had quite the bite of the stock Honda discs, their performance was certainly acceptable, and the tradeoff in steering was worth having to squeeze a little harder to stop. Hauling the 'Hawk down from 150 mph or more, the Beringers behaved respectably and didn't fade under repeated hard stops. Quite impressive.

Of course, now you want to know how it goes. Simply awesome! I've never ridden a street-legal Superbike that had such endless reserves of power yet would still corner well—not even the new ultrashort-stroke Ducati 998R special I rode at Monza over Easter, or the near-200-mph V&M Super Blackbird 1200XX missile I rode a couple years back. The Motopower Firehawk is also a pussycat down low, trailing along

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quite happily in a line of cars at 40 mph without giving the impression it's a caged lion. But spot a gap in the traffic, kick it down a gear, and make sure you're weighting up the handlebars as you twist the throttle because the Firehawk's massive acceleration will lighten the front wheel—and make you glad Savory stuck a steering damper on to calm things down.

Although there's plenty of useful power from 4000 rpm upward, get ready to be impressed once the tach needle hits 7000 rpm because acceleration shoots skyward all the way to 14,200 rpm. You can even short shift the thing due to the stock tranny ratios and still blow off anything out there. The manner in which the bike builds power so hard—but in such linear rather than explosive fashion—is slightly disconcerting at first, because you don't realize you're going so fast. (No time to look at the digital speedo…I was concentrating on where I was pointing it, your honor!)

One reason for this is the smoother response of the engine-management system. The Motopower package feels more refined, more controlled—there's more of everything, especially acceleration. That's also helped by a Translogic powershifter, another option Savory has just fitted to the development 'Hawk I was riding.

A bit too much compression damping in the WP shock made for a slightly harsh ride, and the seat pad Motopower fits in place of the stock saddle was hard on the buns. Still, the multiadjustable and fine-tunable suspension front and rear means I could surely have dialed in a setting I liked better if I'd had more time; it's a factor that will surely be useful when any 'Hawk customer decides to attend a track day and beat up the Suzuki-mounted opposition.

And that's where the true potential of this street-legal Race 'Blade must surely lie, for its other-worldly performance is surely best experienced on the racetrack rather than the public highway, where you'll be going so fast you won't have time to spot the speed cameras or patrol cars, let alone do anything about them.

Mind you, the company's test rider/boss has other ideas, for Knopfler has just commissioned what promises to be the ultimate mile-eating motorcycle from Motopower: a 180-horsepower Firehawk sport-tourer, complete with hard luggage and other long-distance gizmos, all aimed at making the journey faster and more fun for he who must cross continents alone.

Wonder where they'll find space to strap on the optional guitar case.

For more information about Motopower or its Firehawk streetbike contact Motopower at 011 44 1992 443399 or at www.motopower.co.uk. MC

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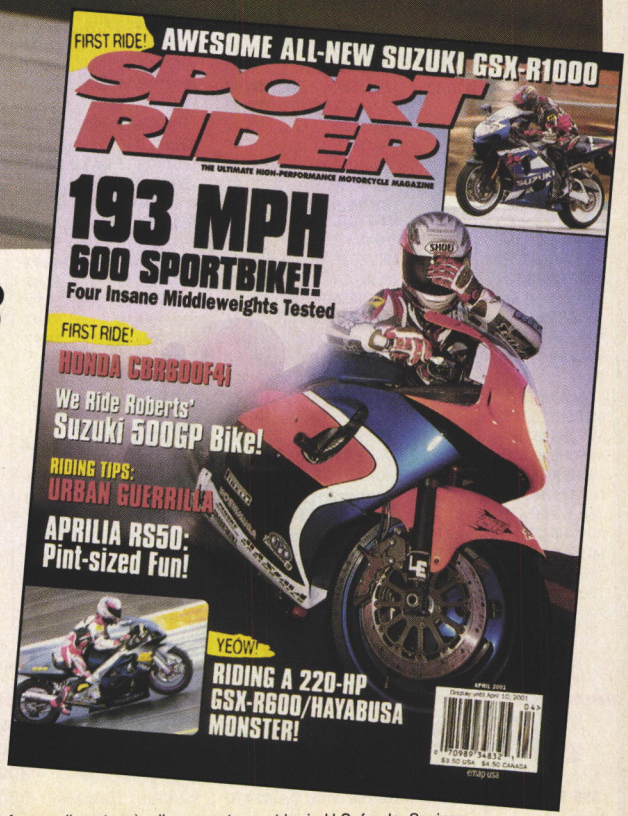

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DUNLOP D220

Front	sale
120/60ZR-17	$81.97
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130/70ZR-17	85.97
120/70ZR-18	86.97
Rear	**sale**
160/60ZR-17	100.97
170/60ZR-17	103.97
180/55ZR-17	107.97
190/60ZR-17	113.97
160/60ZR-18	106.97
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Front	sale
110/80ZR-17	$79.97
120/70ZR-17	83.97
110/80ZR-18	81.97
Rear	**sale**
150/80ZR-16	102.97
140/80ZR-17	98.97
150/70ZR-17	102.97
160/70ZR-17	104.97
170/60ZR-17	103.97
180/55ZR-17	107.97

DUNLOP D402

Front	sale
MT90HB16	$84.97
MT90HB16 SW	99.97
MT90HB16 WWW	106.97
MH90HB21 TT	66.97
Rear	**sale**
MT90HB16	93.97
MT90HB16 SW	105.97
MT90HB16 WWW	110.97

SW = Slim White Wall
WWW = Wide White Wall
TT = Tube Type

DUNLOP K491 ELITE II

Front	sale
MT90HB16 TL	$77.97
MT90HB16 TL RWL	88.97
100/90H18 TL	68.97
MR90H18 TL RWL	85.97
130/70HB18 TL	93.97
MM90HB19 TL	64.97
MM90HB19 TL RWL	67.97
Rear	**sale**
140/90HB15 TL	91.97
MV85HB15 TL RWL	111.97
MT90HB16 TL	86.97
MT90HB16 TL RWL	97.97
MU90HB16 TL	89.97
MU90HB16 TL RWL	100.97
160/80HB16 TL	117.97
MT90HB17 TL	88.97
MT90HB17 TL RWL	97.97
110/90HB18 TL	78.97
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Front	sale
110/90-16	$62.97
120/80B-16	74.97
110/80B-17	76.97
100/90-18	70.97
100/90-19	73.97
Rear	**sale**
130/90B-16	85.97
140/90-16	94.97
150/80B-16	102.97
140/80B-17	103.97
150/70B-17	106.97
120/90-18	82.97
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DUNLOP CRUISEMAX

Front	sale
130/90-16	$62.97
130/90-16 WW	80.97
120/90-18	65.97
100/90-19	53.97
110/90-19	54.97
80/90-21	58.97
Rear	**sale**
140/90-15	72.97
150/90-15	75.97
170/80-15	82.97
140/90-16	78.97
140/90-16 WW	92.97
150/80-16	78.97
150/80-16 WW	89.97

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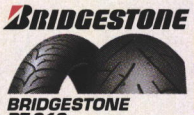

BRIDGESTONE BT-010

Front	sale
130/70ZR-16	$80.97
110/70ZR-17	78.97
120/60ZR-17	78.97
120/70ZR-17 G	78.97
120/65ZR-17	79.97
120/70ZR-17	80.97
Rear	**sale**
160/60ZR-17	96.97
170/60ZR-17	100.97
180/55ZR-17	103.97
190/50ZR-17	120.97
190/50ZR-17 G	120.97
200/50ZR-17	131.97
150/60ZR-18	96.97
160/60ZR-18	103.97

BRIDGESTONE BATTLAX BT-020

Front	sale
120/60ZR-17	$78.97
120/70ZR-17	80.97
110/80ZR-18	80.97
120/70ZR-18	84.97
Rear	**sale**
150/70ZR-17	99.97
160/60ZR-17	96.97
160/70ZR-17	102.97
170/60ZR-17	99.97
180/55ZR-17	103.97
190/50ZR-17	120.97
160/60ZR-18	103.97

BRIDGESTONE BATTLAX BT-012SS

Front	sale
120/70ZR-17	$80.97
Rear	**sale**
180/55ZR-17	103.97
190/50ZR-17	120.97

BRIDGESTONE

BRIDGESTONE BATTLAX BT-45

BT-45 H Front	sale
100/90H-16	$60.97
100/80H-17	71.97
110/70H-17	73.97
110/80H-17	73.97
120/70H-17	75.97
90/90H-18	63.97
100/80H-18	66.97
100/90H-18	65.97
Rear	**sale**
130/90H-16	79.97
120/80H-17	65.97
130/70H-17	80.97
130/80H-17	67.97
140/70H-17	82.97
150/70H-17	83.97
110/80H-18	65.97
110/90H-18	65.97
120/80H-18	67.97
130/70H-18	82.97
140/70H-18	83.99
150/70H-18	85.97
BT-45V Front	**sale**
110/90V-16	66.97
120/80V-16	70.97
110/80V-17	69.97
100/90V-18	69.97
110/80V-18	70.97
110/90V-18	70.97
100/90V-19	70.97
Rear	**sale**
130/90V-16	82.97
150/80V-16	95.97
120/90V-17	78.97
130/90V-17	82.97
140/80V-17	82.97
150/70V-17	83.97
120/90V-18	79.97
130/80V-18	82.97
140/70V-18	83.97
140/80V-18	83.97

BRIDGESTONE S11 SERIES DUAL TREAD

Front	sale
130/90H-16	$62.97
100/90H-18	48.97
110/90H-18	50.97
110/90H-18 RWL	54.97
120/90H-18 RWL	57.97
90/90H-19	50.97
100/90H-19	54.97
100/90H-19 RWL	57.97
110/90H-19	55.97
110/90H-19 RWL	61.97
Rear	**sale**
140/90H-15 RWL	74.97
150/90H-15 RWL	79.97
130/90H-16	65.97
130/90H-16 RWL	71.97
140/90H-16 RWL	79.97
130/90H-17	66.97
110/90H-18	57.97
120/90H-18	59.97
130/90H-18	67.97
130/90H-18 RWL	73.97

BRIDGESTONE EXEDRA FOR HONDA GOLDWINGS

Front	sale
130/90-16	$72.97
130/70-18	84.97
130/70R-18	107.97
Rear	**sale**
150/90-15	106.97
160/80-16	108.97
180/60R-16	137.97

MICHELIN

MICHELIN PILOT SPORT

Front	sale
130/70ZR-16	$99.97
110/70ZR-17	99.97
120/60ZR-17	99.97
120/65ZR-17	102.97
120/70ZR-17	102.97
120/70ZR-17 HPX'	115.97
Rear	**sale**
150/60ZR-17	123.97
160/60ZR-17	125.97
170/60ZR-17	128.97
180/55ZR-17	129.97
180/55ZR-17 HPX'	179.97
190/50ZR-17	156.97
190/50ZR-17 HPX'	179.97
200/50ZR-17 HPX'	183.97

MICHELIN 100X MACADAM

Front	sale
110/70ZR-17	$83.97
110/80ZR-17	84.97
120/60ZR-17	85.97
120/70ZR-17	87.97
110/80ZR-18	85.97
Rear	**sale**
150/70ZR-17	102.97
160/60ZR-17	104.97
170/60ZR-17	107.97
180/55ZR-17	111.97
190/50ZR-17	127.97
160/60ZR-18	105.97

MICHELIN A50/M50/50E

A50 Front	sale
110/90V-16*	$74.97
120/80V-16*	78.97
50E	
110/70H-17	67.97
110/80H-17	67.97
110/80V-17	76.97
120/70V-17	81.97
120/70V-17	81.97
90/90H-18	70.97
100/90H-18	71.97
100/90V-18	77.97
110/80H-18	68.97
110/80V-18	78.97
110/90V-18	81.97
100/90V-19	77.97
100/90H-19	68.97
3.25-H19	62.97
M50 Rear	**sale**
150/90V-15	73.97
130/90V-16	92.97
150/80V-16	97.97
130/70H-17	83.97
130/90V-17	95.97
140/80V-17	96.97
150/70H-17	90.97
150/70V-17	97.97
160/70V-17	114.97
110/90H-18	76.97
4.00H-18	77.97
120/90H-18	83.97
120/90V-18	87.97
130/70H-18	82.97
130/80V-18	93.97

MICHELIN

MICHELIN COMMANDER

Front	sale
MT90H-16 TL	$76.97
130/90H-16 TL	82.97
150/80H-16 TL	88.97
100/90H-18 TL	67.97
110/90H-18	70.97
120/90-18 TL	72.97
90/90H-19 TL	60.97
3.00-H19 TL	54.97
100/90H-19 TL	68.97
110/90H-19	72.97
MH90H-21 TL	71.97
Rear	**sale**
140/90H-15 TL	90.97
150/90H-15 TL	94.97
170/80H-15 TL	106.97
MT90H-16 TL	86.97
150/80H-16 TL	91.97
130/90H-16 TL	86.97
140/90H-16 TL	89.97

MICHELIN TX15/TX25 STREET COMPUND

TX15 Front	sale
120/70ZR-17	$117.97
TX25 Rear	**sale**
190/50ZR-17	158.97

MICHELIN A59X/M59X HI-SPORT

A59X Front	sale
130/60ZR-16	$99.97
M59X Rear	**sale**
160/60ZR-16	120.97

METZELER

METZELER SPORTEC M-1 SUPERSPORT

Front	sale
130/70ZR16	$100.97
110/70ZR-17	100.97
120/60ZR-17	100.97
120/65ZR-17	103.97
120/70ZR-17	103.97
Rear	**sale**
150/60ZR-17	123.97
160/60ZR-17	123.97
170/60ZR-17	127.97
180/55ZR-17	132.97
190/50ZR-17	154.97
200/50ZR-17	165.97

METZELER RENNSPORT SUPERSPORT

Front	sale
110/70ZR-17	$141.97
120/60ZR-17	147.97
120/70ZR-17	147.97
Rear	**sale**
150/60ZR-17	163.97
160/60ZR-17	168.97
180/55ZR-17	182.97
190/50ZR-17	192.97

METZELER

METZELER ME Z4

Front	sale
110/70ZR-17	$92.97
110/80ZR-17	99.97
120/60ZR-17	97.97
120/70ZR-17	101.97
120/70ZR-17 B	101.97
110/80ZR-18	101.97
120/70ZR-18	101.97
Rear	**sale**
150/70ZR-17	120.97
150/70ZR-17 B	120.97
160/60ZR-17	120.97
160/70ZR-17	124.97
170/60ZR-17	124.97
180/55ZR-17 A	151.97
190/50ZR-17	151.97
160/60ZR-18	128.97

METZELER ME 880

Front	sale
130/90H-16	$99.97
130/90HB-16 WWW	120.97
150/80H-116	112.97
120/70VB-17	96.97
120/70VR-17	106.97
120/80V-17	110.97
150/80VR-17	150.97
100/90H-18	89.97
110/90H-18	89.97
120/90HB-18	104.97
130/60VR-18	157.97
130/70HB-18	116.97
130/70HR-18	153.97
130/70VR-18	123.97
100/90H-19	90.97
110/90H-19	94.97
80/90H-21 TT	87.97
90/90H-21	89.97
120/70V-21	110.97
Rear	**sale**
140/80HB-15	122.97
140/90HB-15	117.97
150/80VB-15	127.97
150/90HB-15	129.97
170/80HB-15	136.97
180/70HB-15	136.97
130/90HB-16 WWW	134.97
130/90HB-16	111.97
140/90HB-16	122.97
150/80HB-16	134.97
160/80HB-16	145.97
180/60HR-16	191.97
180/70HR-16	166.97
180/70VR-16	164.97
140/80HB-17	122.97
160/70VB-17	121.97
170/60VR-17	133.97

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METZELER ME33 LASER

Front	sale
120/80V-16	$103.97
120/70V-17	100.97
90/90H-18	75.97
110/90V-18	103.97
3.25V-19	95.97
3.25H-19	82.97
3.50V-19	116.97
3.50H-19	116.97
100/90V-19	99.97
110/90V-19	99.97
90/90H-21	101.97

METZELER ME55A METRONIC

Rear	sale
150/80VB-16	$135.97
130/90V-17	120.97
140/80VB-17	105.97
160/70VB-17	149.97
120/90V-18	114.97
130/80V-18	120.97

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MTR23 Front	sale
110/70ZR-17	$104.97
110/80ZR-17	104.97
120/60ZR-17	104.97
120/70ZR-17	107.97
110/80ZR-18	107.97
120/70ZR-18	107.97
MTR24 Rear	**sale**
150/70ZR-17	127.97
160/60ZR-17	127.97
160/70ZR-17	131.97
170/60ZR-17	131.97
180/55ZR-17	137.97
190/50ZR-17	161.97
160/60ZR-18	136.97

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MTR21 Front	sale
130/70ZR-16	$105.97
110/70ZR-17	105.97
120/60ZR-17	105.97
120/70ZR-17	108.97
MTR22 Rear	**sale**
150/60ZR-17	129.97
160/60ZR-17	130.97
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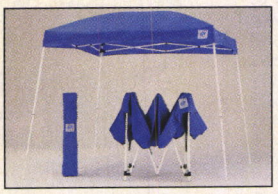

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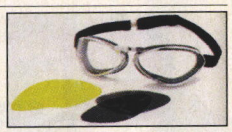

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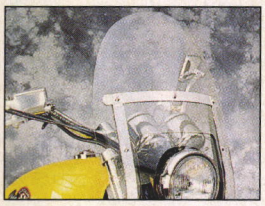

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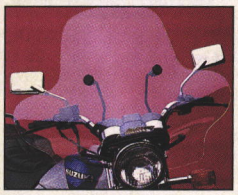

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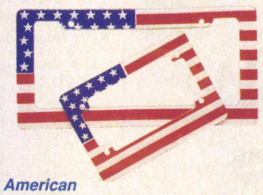

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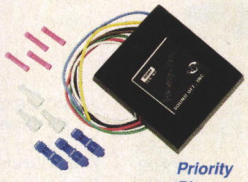

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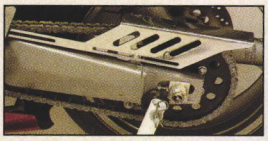

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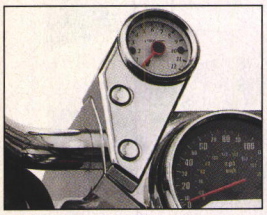

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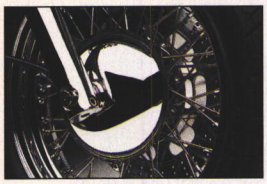

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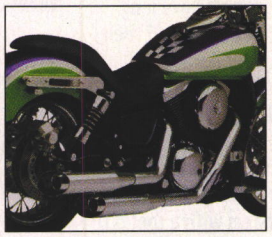

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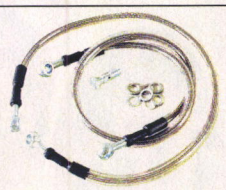

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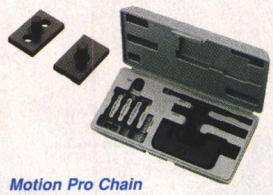

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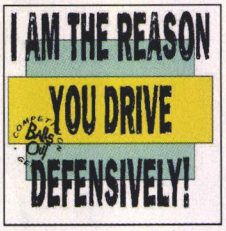

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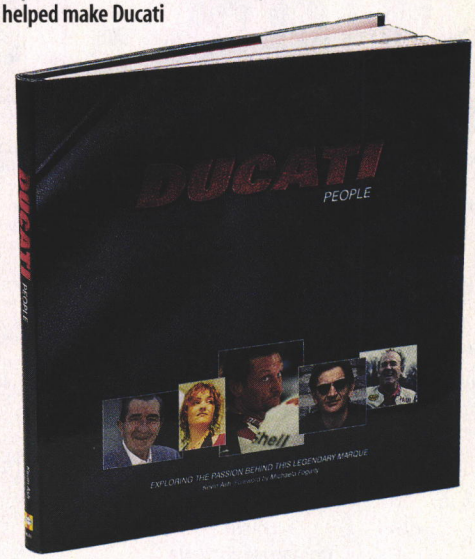
gear box

By Josh Norem
Photos By James Brown

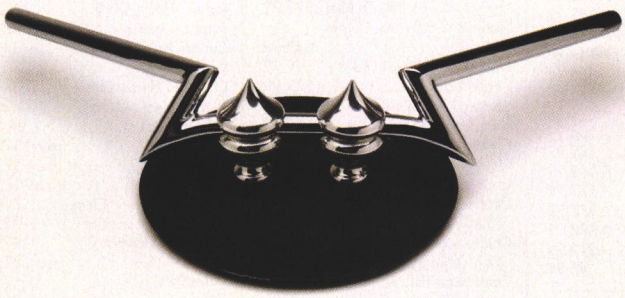
Ducati Diary

Another Ducati coffee-table book? Yes, but this one is different. Rather than page after page about the fabled hardware, Kevin Ash's new tome (*Ducati People*) is about the people behind the bikes. Each chapter focuses on a person who has helped make Ducati what it is today (Fogarty, Taglioni, Tamburini, etc.), or someone who's been profoundly influenced by the company. The accompanying photography is stunning and includes pictures of famous Ducati bikes as well as the people of Ducati at work and play. Get a copy for just $35 by calling (781) 648-6682 or online at www.motolit.com.



Digital Dipstick

Harley-Davidson owners have long sought the true temperature of their bike's oil. Finally, after decades of guessing, the truth is out there in the form of this LCD Oil Temperature Dipstick ($89.95). This device replaces the stock dipstick on all 2000-and-newer Softails, and '84-and-newer Sportsters with a cool LCD readout that has a blue backlight so you can read it at night. The gauge is said to be accurate to plus-or-minus one degree and can display temperatures in either Celsius or Fahrenheit. To order one get on the phone and dial (800) 443-2153 for your nearest dealer, or check out www.harley-davidson.com for the nitty gritty.



Check Out Zese Bars

Paul Yaffe is at it again—that nut! His latest contribution to the world of sexy bike parts are the Z-Bars and Ali Baba Risers. No, the risers aren't named after the CBR954RR Project Leader Tadao Baba, but that's a good guess. The Z-Bars ($199.95) are handmade from five separate pieces welded together and chrome plated. They are 27 inches wide with a three-inch rise and a nine-inch pullback. They go perfectly with the Ali Baba Risers ($229.95), which are machined from 6061-T6 aluminum and polished to a mirrorlike sheen. Call (602) 840-4205 or surf to www.paulyaffeorignals.com.

Sucked Into the Vortex

The Spyke Vortex, that is. An ex-staffer crash-tested this black/silver suit at the YZF-R1 intro in Spain, and because he's still alive we have to assume it did its job just fine. The Vortex ($1389) is made with full-grain leather that's perforated, and includes CE armor in the shoulders, elbows, knees and back. It's even got a snazzy aerodynamic hump on its back like that guy from Notre Dame. If you're looking for one of the best leather suits money can buy, your search is over. Call the U.S. distributor at (909) 608-0082 or go to www.twsusa.com for details and colors.

Roll Your Own

Roll your own tools, we mean, with Roadgear's handy Sport-Touring Tool Pouch. Just put your tools in, roll it up and secure the two latches. Voilá, tool roll. Show all your friends. The roll accommodates a wide variety of tool sizes thanks to its three-layer design, and even has a glow-in-the-dark logo on the front so you can find it in your dark garage at 2:00 A.M. It costs $25.90 (black, gray/black, red/black or yellow/black), and can be purchased by calling (800) 854-4327or at www.roadgear.com.

Air to the Throne

As a motorcycle rider, you're probably familiar with the phenomenon of "stank foot." It's not pretty, nor is it any fun in the car after a day at the track. To keep this disgusting malady at bay, try SIDI's Vertebra 2 Air Carbon Boots. They have the same protective qualities of the awesome Vertebra 2, but include a perforated Lorica outer shell to cool your feet. The boots come with shin and ankle protectors fashioned from carbon fiber, also. For best results—according to SIDI—wear these boots with its Coolmax Monza sock (reviewed in July). The "Vert Air" boots cost $285 and come in black only. Call Motonation at (877) 789-4940 or order online at www.motonation.com.

mc tested:

Impact Armor Chest and Back Protector

Although we haven't had the chance to crash-test Impact Armor's chest and back protector yet (give us time, we won't let you down) we're pretty impressed with its fit and finish. The protectors are custom-made, so when you order you provide measurements of your torso (they have a fitting guide online, so it's easy), and you can even make marks on a prototype protector they send you to make sure the fit is perfect. On our chest and back protector combo, the fit is flawless. While wearing it underneath our leathers on a bike, we can't even tell its there. Both protectors are quite thin compared with others on the market, which makes them more comfortable to wear. But they still have a three-layer impact diffusion system that's good enough for Nicky Hayden and Colin Edwards, so it should be plenty for you. The only criticism we have is the chest protector blocks air flow to your chest, so whenever we wear the chest protector our rippling pecs become overwhelmed with perspiration. We'd love to bitch about the price, but for $250 you can get both protectors; that's a steal considering the level of quality and custom fitting. You can also have your name and a custom logo added to the protectors (as shown here) for no extra cost.

PRICE: $85 for chest
$175 for back
RATING: ★★★★½
VERDICT: *Perfect fit, comfortable, excellent craftsmanship.*

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www.impactarmor.com

gear box

Wanna Do a Shot?

If you're the proud owner of a Yamaha Warrior, you may be looking to ditch the torpedo-size exhaust canister in favor of a sleeker unit. From Vance & Hines' Big Shots line of exhausts comes this 2-into-2 system ($479), which features full-coverage heat shields that are "virtually blue-proof." Vance & Hines also sells a 2-into-1 system named the Pro Pipe ($449). The pipes include all necessary mounting hardware and easy-to-understand installation instructions. For more info, contact Vance & Hines at (562) 921-7461 or go to www.vanceandhines.com.

Over the Shoulder Holder

Courier bags aren't just for couriers anymore. This Deluxe Courier Bag ($85) from Marsee is made with the same 1050 Ballistic fabric found on its riding gear and is waterproof, also. Inside are five storage compartments, with two external pockets and a reflective logo and striping for conspicuity at night. It also features an expandable main compartment, which is big enough for a laptop computer or enough clothes for a weekend getaway. To order call (800) 293-2400 or go to www.marseeproducts.com.

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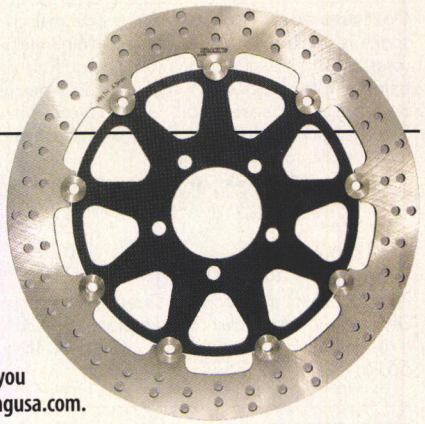
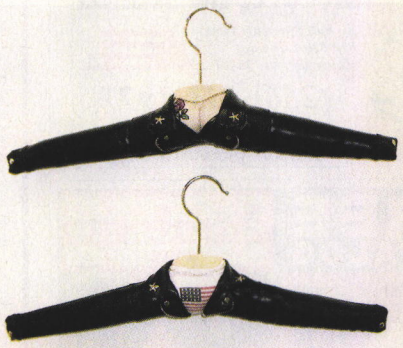
Now *this* is trick. For the motorcyclist who has everything there's this carbon-fiber toilet seat from Rider Performance Motorcycles. The custom-made lid and seat shave many pounds from your stock setup, and looks as cool as all get out. The set even includes chrome bracketing, all for $125. Call (714) 671-1005 to order or go to www.riderperformance motorcycles.com for info.

Even More Carbon Fiber

Now that the carbon-fiber toilet seat has been invented it was only a matter of time before brake rotors would receive carriers of similar construction. Behold, Braking USA's StremX Rotors with carbon-fiber carrier ($349). The rotors are stainless steel and are fully floating to avoid warping due to excessive heat. The carbon-fiber carriers offer strength, are lightweight and have that "carbon" look. Braking USA recommends using its CM55 or CM66 pads with these rotors, just so you know. To order, ring (800) 272-5342 or go on the Web to www.brakingusa.com.

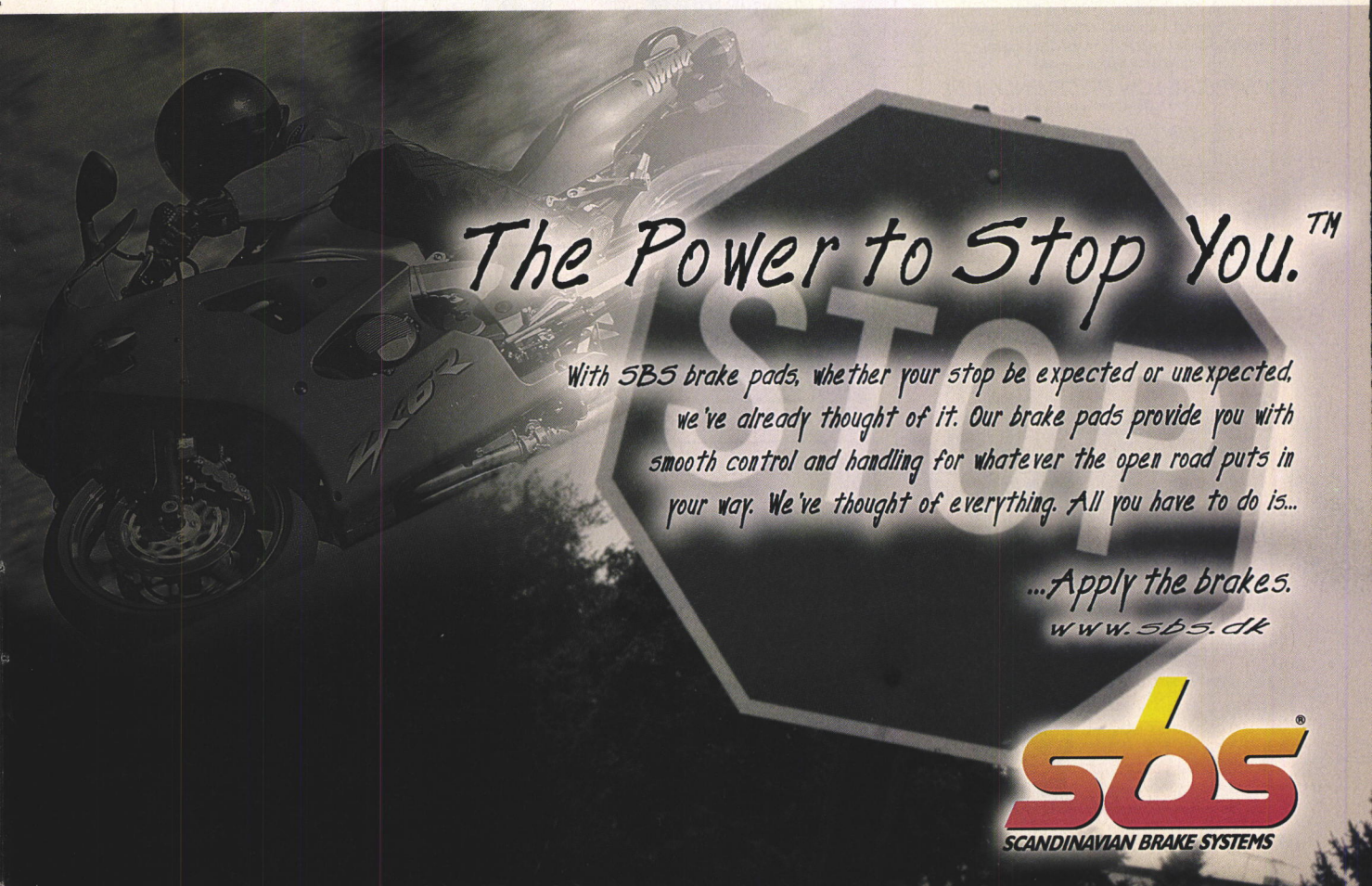




Naughty Hanger

Ah, American innovation. From McNaughton Inc. come these sassy coat hangers, all dressed up and ready to hang your favorite set of chaps, biker jacket or any other clothing. These dressed hangers ($10) come in a variety of charming outfits, including a black biker jacket for the men or a woman's jacket complete with cleavage. If you prefer a more moderate coat hanger, blue-jeans combo and business-attire hangers are also available. The hangers can be ordered by calling (612) 381-0020 or online at www.gadjits.com. MC

Got swag? If you're a vendor with a new product, please send either the product or high-resolution photography (preferably color transparencies) to Josh Norem, c/o *Motorcyclist*, 6420 Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90048. Be sure to include contact information and pricing. Digital photos and press releases can be e-mailed to noremj@primediacmmg.com.



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Performance Marketplace advertising space is available in 1" to 3" units. Minimum insertion is 3 issues within contract year. Rates below are for black and white units on a per-ad basis. Please call for rates on 2-color and 4-color ads. Rates are effective with the January 2002 issue.

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For additional info, contact Direct Marketing Division, *Motorcyclist* Marketplace, 6420 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90048-5515; (323) 782-2535.

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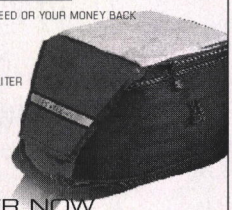

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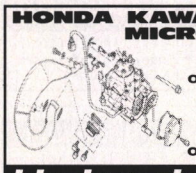

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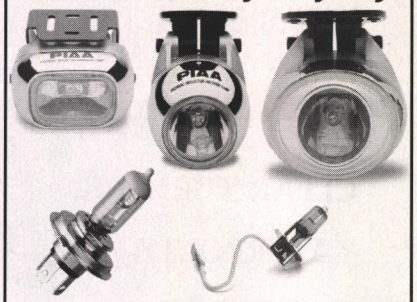
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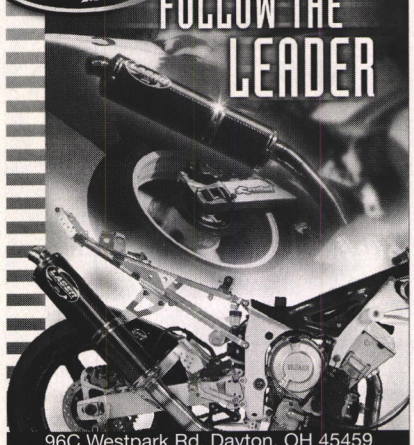
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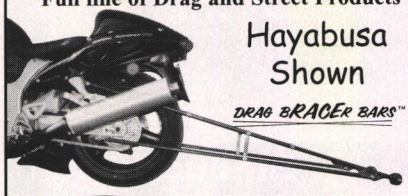
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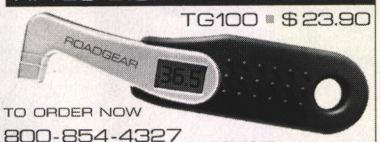

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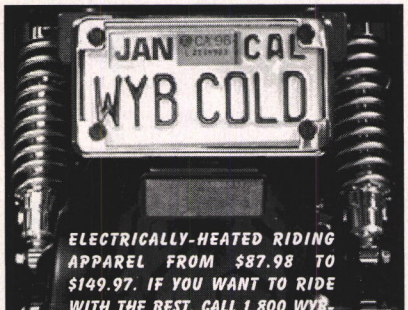

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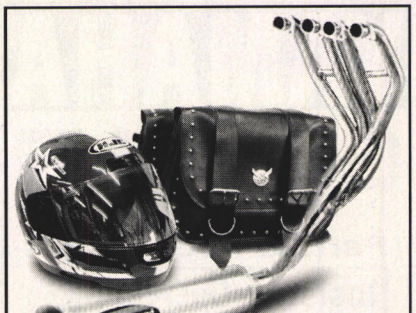

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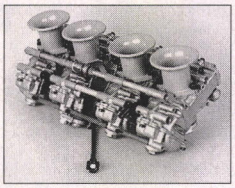

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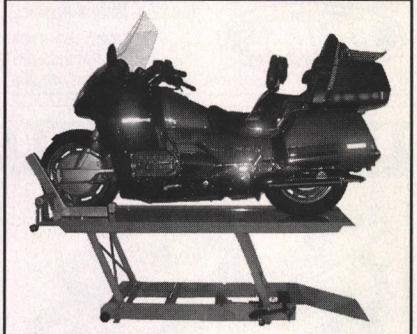

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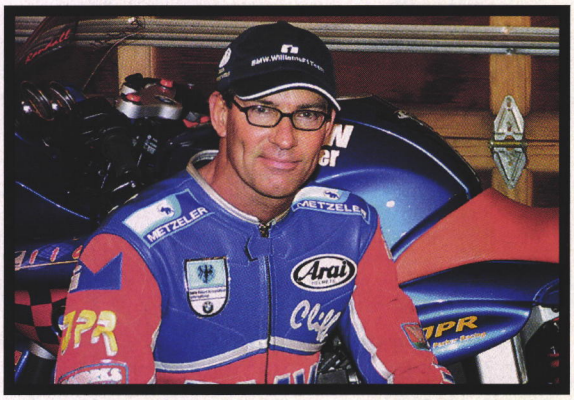
Edited By Marc Cook

INDUSTRY INSIDER

Nine Ways To Better Fuel-Injection Mapping

Cliff Randall is an executive headhunter by day and an extremely experienced special-ops bike modifier by night. "I don't really build anything, I let others who have the proper facilities and skills do the paint, chrome work, etc. My real forte is in the initial design, assembly and the all-important final tuning," he says, leaving unsaid what so many modifiers know too well: Many hot, hopped-up bikes aren't as nice to ride as the stock models, because they're not developed far enough, not given the kind of refinement the OEMs are expected to deliver. In particular, Randall has become highly conversant with Dynojet's Power Commander and its associated software. Here he shares his hard-earned experience to make home-brewed fuel-injection mapping easier.



1 Don't be afraid to experiment (after reading the instruction manual of course). This is the first piece of advice I like to give tuners and others just starting out with the Power Commander. If you have a fundamental understanding of carburetion, then there's essentially nothing you can do in the fuel-injection software that will hurt the engine (with the exception of tweaking ignition timing, which I'll talk more about in a moment). If you follow the directions and spend some time learning the software and its relationship to the engine's performance—believe me, it's easy to do—you'll have absolutely no trouble making, saving and downloading injection-map changes to your heart's content. [This is true of the similar Yoshimura EMS software, also.—Ed.]

2 Take care when installing the Power Commander module, make it accessible. When you install the PC, and here I'm talking primarily about the current Power Commander III and IIIR, you simply unplug the existing plastic ECU cables and introduce the PC between them. The connectors are large and sometimes hidden deep in the motorcycle. Take your time and pay close attention to how the latches on the connectors work. [For a more detailed look at a PC installation, see How-To, page 132.] You can avoid difficult troubleshooting later if you're careful during the initial installation. But don't get too worried: On most bikes the connectors cannot be hooked up incorrectly. I also suggest making the serial cable—the umbilical cord connecting the Power Commander to the computer you'll be using to tweak the maps—as easily accessible as possible. On my Muzzys Kawasaki ZX-1270R project bike, for example, the custom tailsection is one piece, so I temporarily mounted a serial cable to the PC and ran the cable forward along the frame, up under the gas tank to the inner front fairing, creating a watertight home for the connector with a Ziploc bag. The cable must be accessible because this map tweaking could take a couple of weeks. It took me more than 100 hours of constant fiddling to get the Muzzys Kawasaki ZX-1270R running to my liking. Seeing that mine was one of the original 1270 Muzzys project bikes, I received tremendous support from and shared all of my findings with Doug Meyer and his team at Muzzys.

3 Do the proper post-installation setups. Once the PC and Dynojet map for your bike are installed, I strongly recommend you take a trip to a good motorcycle shop with a dyno where the folks have an exhaust-gas "sniffer" to provide exhaust info. A few initial runs on the dyno, with the exhaust sniffer in place, will give you a good look at the engine's characteristics and the related mixture. Most aftermarket maps are good for maximum performance and you should fine-tune yours to your style of riding. Your job is to use the dyno map as a baseline and add or subtract fuel (via your laptop) to set your motor up the way you want it to run. The shop should also check your throttle-position sensor (TPS) with a ohmmeter. It is important to determine that your TPS is set correctly, (refer to the shop manual for your bike). Once the TPS is "baselined" correctly, synchronize the 0 and 100 percent throttle positions between the TPS signal and the Power Commander through the PC software. (It's under the Utilities menu, called "Set Throttle Position.") Now the map will correspond accurately to the throttle openings.

4 Learn the software. This aspect is so important it deserves a second mention. For the Power Commander, you can go online (www.powercommander.com) and download the user's manual. The biggest problem I encountered in the beginning, because I was comfortable with the concepts behind rejetting and remapping, was figuring out how to use the computer program properly!

5 Do not get confused by the mapping numbers. Read your map in a pattern from top left to bottom right, recognizing that as you increase the percent of throttle you also increase the rpm, therefore the signal is transferred in a

quasi-diagonal format matrixing with the variables of rpm and throttle position, as per the map grid. A higher number means more fuel, and a lower number means less fuel—it's that simple. Changes of less than five points on a map will appear transparent to most laymen and many tuners, so don't bother making changes in the fuel flow of less than five points. In most cases you will never notice the difference.

A good map is typically a good map for most conditions. What I'm saying is that once you get the motor set up properly, you really don't need to be changing maps unless you modify the engine further. It's like a good carb setup: Once it's done, it's done.

Problems are usually easy to solve. If you ever have a problem when you're out and about, and you think it is related to the PC, disconnect it and reconnect the ECU's stock connectors. The bike will default to the stock fuel-injection settings and allow you to get home. Remember you can't connect the ECU cables up wrong, the connectors on most bikes won't let you.

Go easy on the ignition advance. A little (no more than 5 percent) on most stock bikes will give you crisper performance and a little more top-end power, as long as you can guarantee the use of good quality 92 octane fuel. Bad fuel has less octane, which can cause detonation. The PCIIIR will allow you to effect ignition change via a separate and easy to use map. Don't get too carried away with this mod unless you enjoy holing pistons. Ignition changes are best saved for higher performance engines, which, in most cases, have much more compression than stock. Then retarding the ignition is the order of the day, not advancing it.

It *is* worth the effort. Two of my great successes with the Power Commander involve the ZX-12R. After a lot of work, I was able to eliminate the abrupt "on/off" throttle response created by the stock ZX-12R's fuel-injection setup. The fix is a mapped "fuel-loading" program that adds large amounts of fuel (25 to 35 percent) to the map from closed throttle all the way to 60 percent throttle in a staggered style down through the map. The theory was to add fuel in areas where you would typically never run or accelerate through; however, you would always roll off through these positions and therefore pick up fuel loads that would soften the stock map's abrupt on/off characteristics. When you're on the boil and you roll off the throttle, the modified map picks up this added fuel and continues to burn it all the way down to closed throttle (or wherever you get back on the juice) keeping the motor turning. Secondly, I designed a fuel map that leaned the air/fuel mixture between 2000 and 3000 rpm—where many aftermarket headers caused a flat spot on the ZX-12R—to more accurately match the apparent engine vacuum loss and therefore lower airflow. These changes made a huge difference in the engine performance and rider enjoyment of the ZX-12R.

—Cliff Randall

Smart Money

Yamaha FJ1100 and FJ1200, 1984–1993

- **CHEER:** Monstrous torque, (reasonably) sporting and highly comfortable
- **JEER:** Slightly buzzy engine, goofy antidive units on early bikes, limited cornering clearance
- **MAINTENANCE WATCH:** Cracked plastic, fragile second gear, exhaust-system rust, fuel-cap venting, sticky starter button
- **VERDICT:** Still relevant performance for the smart shopper
- **PRICE:** FJ1100 $2000 ('84), $2320 ('85)
  FJ1200 $2465 ('86), $2635 ('87), $2935 ('89), $3125 ('90), $3235 ('91), $3585 ('92)
  FJ1200 with ABS $4080 ('92), $4545 ('93)

YAMAHA'S FJ1100 AND FJ1200 HAVE HAD A loyal following. Although originally Yamaha's leading-edge superbike, by 1986 the big FJ had become the company's de facto sport-tourer—and a good one at that. Its frame was the earliest production perimeter-type frame on an inline-four, simplifying maintenance of the 1097cc (or 1188cc from '86 onward) air-cooled mill. Physically larger and more comfortable than its competition, the FJ has proven to be a popular neo-sport-tourer mount.

With a low CG, a relatively low and spacious seat, a generously sized fairing (and consequently effective), the big FJ made inhaling the miles pretty painless. Remember, though, that the FJ isn't a hard-core sportbike, despite the suggestions offered by the stout engine. The centerstand and exhaust grind early—even with aftermarket suspension upgrades—so you'll have to limit your friskiness on two lanes. The motor was as reliable as an axe, but with any air-cooled engine, expect power to diminish somewhat over 40,000 miles due to heat cooking the middle two cylinders; budget for a top-end freshening if you want max power. Chains, sprockets, tires and brakes, as you might expect with a torquemeister like this, don't live real long unless scrupulously maintained.

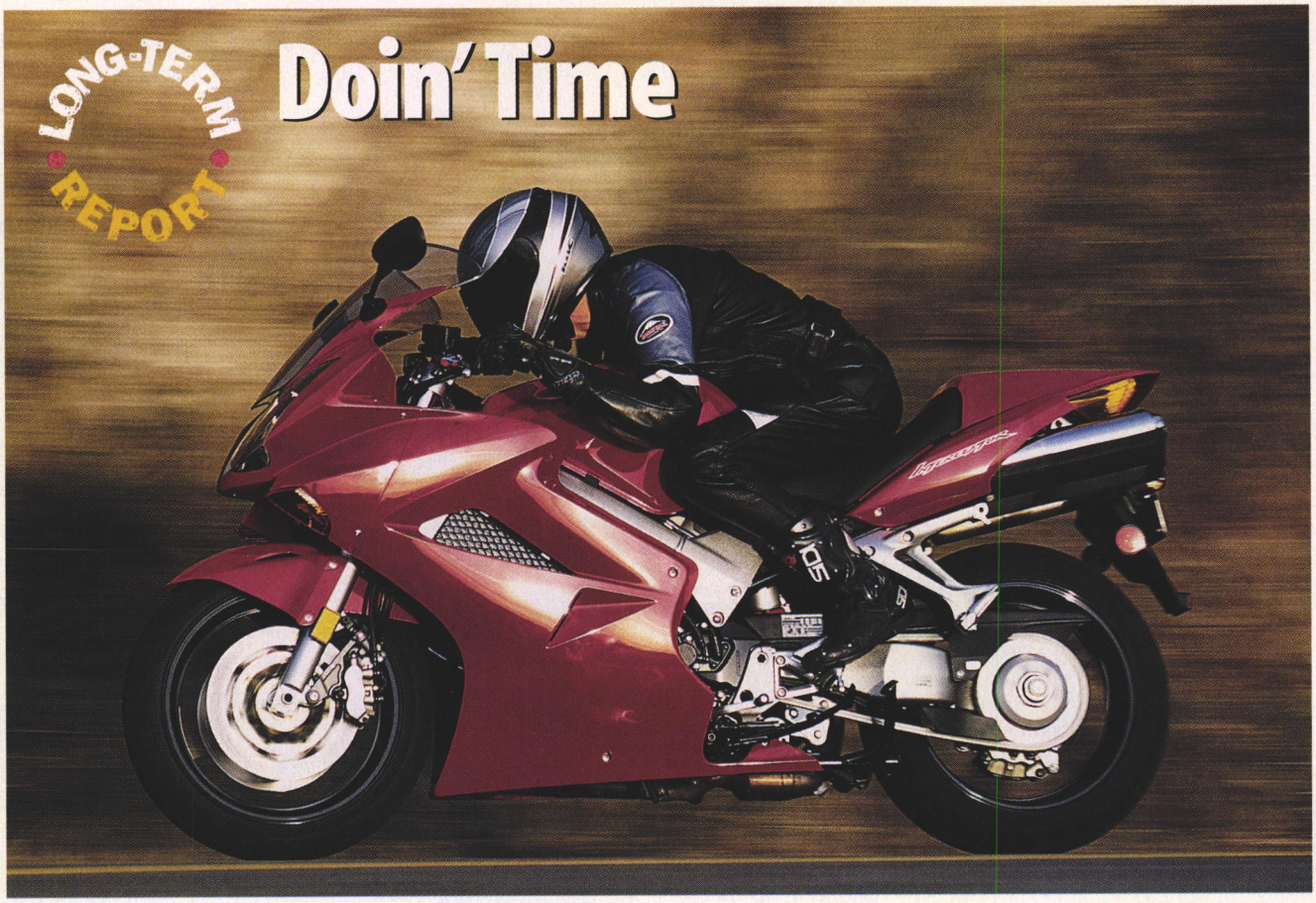
In '88, Yamaha changed the fairing—the main difference was the taller shield—but this and the previous fairing do not interchange. Also, the '89 models got 17-inch wheels, four-piston front brake calipers and floating rotors. Two years later came rubber engine mounts to quell the vibes and an updated shock. Finally, the '92–'93 models had ABS, offered first as an option, then made standard the final year. It added approximately 11 pounds to the bike.

Buyers should be looking for exhaust-system rust, vibration-induced cracking of the bodywork, leaking antidive modules, and most seriously, a somewhat fragile second gear on high-mileage or abused examples. On California bikes, the fume-capture function of the emission system can fail and mimic fuel starvation; most owners have vented the cap. The mighty engine uses shim-over-bucket valve adjustments, as was standard Yamaha practice in those days, and it's a breeze to do the work because of the lack of coolant hoses along with those wide frame rails. Preference is to be given to the '91–'93 models because they are simply the best-sorted and most refined, and as always look for the most well-maintained, low-mileage example you can find. *—David Tong*

...the FJ isn't a hard-core sportbike, despite the...stout engine.

LONG-TERM REPORT

Doin' Time



KEVIN WING

Honda Interceptor

Solid, but not perfect

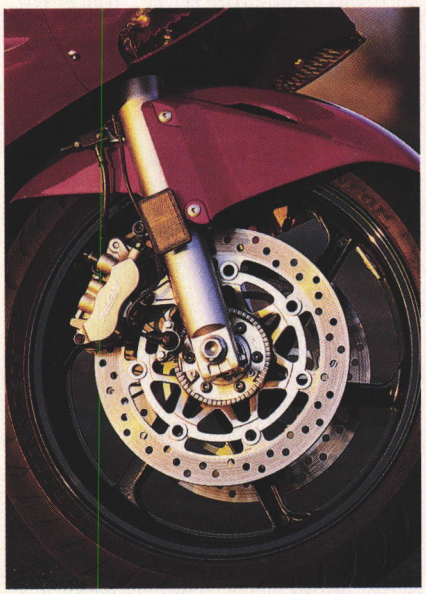
- *Ringleader:* **Boehm**
- *MSRP:* **$9999, $10,999 for ABS (2002 model)**
- *Miles:* **3500–4400**
- *Average Fuel Mileage:* **35 mpg**
- *Recent Modifications:* **Dunlop D220 sport-touring tires, DP Brakes Sport HH+ brake pads**

I WASN'T QUITE ABLE TO GET TO 4500 MILES this time around, and I didn't get to the luggage evaluations I'd promised. (I could blame Cook and Carrithers and all the Hooligan-bike stuff they forced me to do, but hey, it *was* fun.) Still, the 'Ceptor and I are making good headway toward the magic 10,000-mile mark, and I'm mostly enjoying the experience. Mostly.

What continues to impress me are the changes made last month: the addition of DP Brakes pads and the change to Dunlop D220 sport-touring skins (the replacements for the venerable D205s in Dunlop's lineup). As I wrote last month, the new pads significantly improve the VFR's stopping ability and lever crispness, and they continue to be soft on the discs, too. What I failed to notice last month, though, is the slightly more front-end bias they give the bike's linked brake system. Because the front pads use DP's super-grippy HH+ material and the rears don't (their friction abilities are closer to those of the stock pads), there's more braking power up front than stock, which means the bike brakes more like a conventional setup. I'm a big fan of linked brakes on everything short of Supersport machinery, though I must admit this extra bit of front-end stopping power is both fun and useful, especially when I get the chance to wick 'er up a bit on some serpentine back road. It's a superb change.

The Dunlops are equally excellent. Grippy yet compliant, the D220s transform the VFR's semi-harsh suspension package and make the ride much more pleasant. Steering is totally neutral, and at this point they don't seem to be wearing at all. I plan to spoon a pair of also-excellent Metzeler ME-Z4s onto the VFR's wheels sometime in the next few months, though with the way the D220s are working it may be a while before I get the itch.

Now the bad news. Previous-generation VFRs (1998–'01 models) are well-known for their charging-system glitches; it seems the regulator/rectifier assembly isn't up to the job, especially on bikes that are ridden slowly in traffic and with high-beams during the day. Well, if my experience last weekend in the Santa Monica Mountains while doing some Buell Firebolt testing with Carrithers is any indication, the new bike is prone to the same problem. After watching surfers get pounded by some Pacific turbulence along the Pacific Coast Highway, we went to start the VFR—and found the battery was dead. Luckily, a push-start got us going. It doesn't seem to be an isolated case, either; readers have e-mailed me about the same symptoms. Honda is looking into the problem, and has asked for our bike back to check it out. I'll keep you posted.



Gripping stuff. Adding DP Brakes pads and Dunlop D220 skins to the chassis mix have significantly improved its braking and suspension performance. Too bad we're having charging-system problems.

One other glitch I've noticed is the tendency for the pointy front ends of the seat to catch on my Aerostich-covered thighs when I put my feet down during stops. It's not a biggie, but it's bothersome.

Next month, some soft-luggage options. I promise. . . really.

—*M.B.*

What About The Others?

KAWASAKI ZX-9R

Ringleader: **Carrithers**
Miles: **4800–5400**

Had I not taken the disused copper-colored Ninja into protective custody, it might have died, moldering as it was behind a miserable, square-barrel 400 Maico. Such was the ZX-9R's lot after finishing fourth of four in the 2002 superbike shootout. Unless you're a 144-horsepower, 437-pound GSX-R1000, nobody returns your calls. Let's get over ourselves for a second, shall we?

If you'd rather carve a lost weekend worth of corners—not just of a baker's dozen after breakfast on Sunday—the ZX-9R is miles ahead of its punishing opposition. The jury is still out on the Harbor Freight Tools horn, but the bike's last handler did the low-rev zone a great service by backing the fuel screws out a turn from stock. New slow-speed jets remain an "if" until further study makes them a "when." In another 1000 miles or so I'll know what sort of ministrations might best refresh the fork and shock that are beginning to lose that new-bike edge. Having learned loud pipes dredge up complex—and often expensive—emotions in the cop heart, I'll pass on the obligatory trick exhaust system for now. There are other ways to pare off a few of the ZX-9R's 472 pounds. The previous administration was evidently making noises about abandoning the perfectly serviceable cylinder and pistons for something called a Superbike Mike 1050 kit. That's probably a really good idea if you'd rather turn wrenches instead of riding on the weekend, but 125 horsepower will be just fine for now, thanks.

As one forced to grind 8500 miles from a set of Michelin Pilot Sports, the freshly mounted BT-012SS Bridgestones are a blank canvas. Better still, they're a perfect excuse to explore various interstate coefficients of friction in the name of science. Then what? I wonder how many sets of tires we can eat in the next 4600 miles?

—T.C.

SUZUKI GSX-R1000

Ringleader: **Norem**
Miles: **1800–2150**

This month I rode the GSX-R1000 almost nonstop (in my dreams, that is). I'm still sidelined with a gimp leg, so Cook has been taking care of The Daddy in my absence. He's been kind enough to add a few parts to the bike, though, including a device that I was dying to try out: the RevLight by Datatool (888/922-9269, www.actionstation.com). The RevLight is a row of green/amber/red LEDs that act as a tachometer and shift light. As the revs rise the LEDs light up at a programmable rate. Nifty eh? Cook says it took approximately an hour to install (including wiring an optional mode button) and he digs it, but sunlight washes the LEDs out a smidgen. (I plan to put a tinted windscreen on the Suzuki, so this is a short-term problem.) Also, the big GSX-R has so much power throughout the rev range that a shift light seems a bit superfluous. The RevLight is more suited to smaller displacement bikes that require frequent shifting, it seems.

Our friends at *Sport Rider*, unable to get Editor Kunitsugu off their GSX-R1000 for five minutes, installed an Arata full-exhaust along with a Power Commander. There are no maps for the Arata, so Cook chose a map designed for a Yoshimura system that removes the SET exhaust valve. The pipe alone added 5.7 horsepower and flattened the torque curve, and Cook (the bastard!) says the bike runs extremely well. He also installed a set of EBC HH+ sintered brake pads, but those are still being scrubbed in. Hopefully by next month I will have ridden the bike a bit, but telling my physical therapist to speed up my program so I can ride a GSX-R1000 has had no effect on her so far. She must be a Red Rider.

—J.N.

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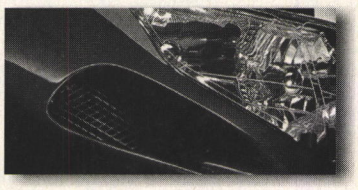

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Technique: Group Therapy

KEVIN WING

RIDING A MOTORCYCLE is dangerous enough. But to do it with a group of people, on curvy public roads, can invite even *more* disaster. Luckily, it doesn't have to be this way, especially if you keep your cool and follow a few basic ground rules.

First, riding in a group is not exactly a game of "follow the leader." The lead person's job is to control the pace and alert those following to any hazards on the road. But remember, the leader's line through a corner may not always be the best line. Lead riders aren't immune to mistakes, and if they make one and you're following too closely you can end up right there with them when they go off the road and up a creek (so to speak). Pay attention to that rider for signs of hazards, but pick your own line through the corners and always leave enough following distance to be able to stop if that person goes down—or sideways.

Secondly, group riding is not a race. If you are faster than the person in front of you, resist the temptation to pass them unless an obvious and clear opportunity presents itself. More than likely, that person is less experienced than you, and being passed in the wrong place or at too high a speed might startle them. If you don't like being held up, be patient until the next stop and be sure to que up before the folks you feel are slower than you.

Also, every group should have a designated "backmarker" (someone who's a bit slower and not interested in pushing the pace). This person can follow the group and make sure everyone makes it to the designated rest stops (staffer Cook does this on occasion during our group rides). With a designated rider bringing up the rear, as soon as he or she arrives you'll know everyone made it to the stopping point. Also, be sure everyone knows the route prior to departure so nobody is caught off guard when the lead rider slows down to negotiate a turn.

These are just the basics, but whenever or wherever you ride in a group be sure to take other peoples' safety into consideration along with your own. If done properly, group riding can be one of the safest and most rewarding experiences possible on two wheels.

Street Savvy: Who's Got Your Back?

JAMES BROWN

BACK PROTECTORS, BODY ARMOR, WHATEVER it's called its mission is the same: to protect your spine from being snapped like a twig in case of impact. When selecting a back protector keep in mind that a quality unit must be able to absorb and dissipate an impact, thereby deflecting energy away from your spinal column rather than transferring it to your vertebrae. Because dissipation is the goal, you'd be wise to steer clear of back protectors that are made of nothing but hard armor. Not only will this type of protector not diffuse the blow, it will also act like a cheese grater on the back of your leathers. Having a hard plastic surface below your leathers while you're sliding along the ground will result in far more damage to your leathers (and your spine, possibly) than having a soft, impact-diffusing protector. Luckily, there are numerous back protectors available that will keep you safe in the event of a crash. Shown here is Helimot's TLV Back protector, which uses a raised layer of foam over the spine to spread the impact out before it reaches your vertebrae. Get the drift? Do some research and find a back protector that's right for you—and your spine.

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5. Random Drawing: On or about 7/30/02, winner will be selected by random drawing from all eligible entries received. Drawing conducted by Alexander Direct (an independent judging organization), whose decisions (along with Sponsor and Administrator) on all matters related to this Sweepstakes shall be final and binding. Entrant selected as a potential winner must comply with all terms and conditions set forth in these Official Rules, and winning is contingent upon fulfilling all such requirements. Odds of winning depend on the total number of eligible entries received. Potential winner will be notified by mail by about 8/1/02. Prize will be awarded.

6. Prize: One (1) grand prize will be awarded, consisting of: a) a 2002 Ford Harley-Davidson™ F-150 SuperCrew (approximate retail value ("ARV"): $36,735); b) a 2002 Harley-Davidson® FLSTFI Fat Boy® motorcycle (ARV: $15,795). Neither Ford Motor Company and/or Harley-Davidson Motor Company, Inc. provide additional verbal or written warranties other than the standard written warranty statement provided with the vehicles. The actual grand-prize F-150 truck and motorcycle to be awarded will be chosen solely at the discretion of the Sponsor and may not be the truck/bike displayed with this sweepstakes. Winner will be solely responsible for all costs associated with and procuring (where applicable) all vehicle title, license, registration, freight, delivery, dealer prep, emissions inspection, additional equipment, all federal, state and local taxes, insurance, gasoline, vehicle maintenance and all other fees and expenses associated with the receipt and use of the Grand Prize vehicle. Grand-Prize winner must present valid driver's license and satisfactory proof of insurance prior to delivery. Total approximate retail value of the Grand Prize is $52,530. Number of Prizes: One (1) grand prize. Prize is nontransferable and must be accepted as awarded. No cash or other substitution may be made, except by Sponsor in the event that a prize cannot be awarded for any reason in which case, Sponsor will award a prize of equal or greater value.

7. Other Terms and Conditions: Potential winner (and any guests who will share in a prize) must execute and return any required Affidavit of Eligibility, Liability Release, and where lawful, a Publicity Release, within ten (10) days of postmark, failing which the potential winner will be disqualified and another winner selected in the place of the disqualified person at random from all eligible entries received. If any prize or prize notification is returned as non-deliverable, the potential winner will be disqualified and another potential winner will be selected in the original potential winner's place. By accepting a prize, winner agrees that the Sponsor, Administrator and those acting under the Sponsor's/Administrator's authority, may photograph winner, and may use winner's names, address, prize won, picture/portrait likeness and/or voice, for advertising and promotional purposes without further consideration, unless prohibited by law. BY ACCEPTING A PRIZE, WINNER AGREES THAT THE SPONSOR AND ADMINISTRATOR, AND THEIR RESPECTIVE PARENT COMPANIES, SUBSIDIARIES, AFFILIATES, DIVISIONS, DEALERS, ADVERTISING AND PROMOTION AGENCIES, HARLEY-DAVIDSON MOTOR COMPANY, INC., THEIR RESPECTIVE DIVISIONS, AFFILIATES, SUBSIDIARIES, DEALERS, ADVERTISING AND PROMOTING AGENCIES, AND ALL OF THE SPONSOR'S/ADMINISTRATOR'S RESPECTIVE OFFICERS, DIRECTORS, EMPLOYEES, REPRESENTATIVES AND AGENTS, WILL HAVE NO LIABILITY WHATSOEVER FOR, AND WILL BE HELD HARMLESS BY WINNER FOR ANY LIABILITY FOR ANY INJURY, LOSS OR DAMAGES OF ANY KIND TO PERSONS, INCLUDING DEATH, AND PROPERTY, DUE IN WHOLE OR IN PART, DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY, FROM THE ACCEPTANCE, POSSESSION, USE OR MISUSE OF THE PRIZE OR PARTICIPATION IN THIS SWEEPSTAKES OR PARTICIPATION IN ANY SWEEPSTAKES OR PRIZE RELATED ACTIVITY. Subject to all federal, state and local laws. Void where prohibited.

8. Miscellaneous: All entries become the sole property of Administrator and none will be returned. By entering, each entrant agrees to the collection of all information on each entry, and to its transfer to third parties. In the event of a dispute, entries made by Internet will be deemed made by the authorized account holder of the e-mail address submitted at the time of entry. The "authorized account holder" is deemed the natural person who is assigned to an e-mail address by an Internet access provider, service provider or other online organization that is responsible for assigning e-mail addresses for the domain associated with the submitted e-mail address. A potential winner may be requested to provide Sponsor/Administrator with proof that the potential winner is the authorized account holder of the e-mail address associated with the winning entry. If for any reason the Sweepstakes is not capable of running as planned, including due to infection by computer virus, bugs, tampering, unauthorized intervention, fraud, technical failure, human error or any other causes beyond the control of Sponsor/Administrator that corrupts or affects the administration, security, fairness, integrity, or proper conduct of the Sweepstakes, Sponsor/Administrator reserve the right in their sole discretion, to disqualify any individual who tampers with the entry process, and to cancel, terminate, modify or suspend the Sweepstakes. In which case, winner will be chosen in a random drawing from all eligible entries received prior to termination. Sponsor/Administrator assume no responsibility for any error, omission, interruption, deletion, defect, delay in operation or transmission, communications line failure, theft or destruction or unauthorized access to, or alteration of, entries. The Sponsor/Administrator are not responsible for any problems or technical malfunction of any telephone network or lines, computer online systems, servers, or providers, computer equipment, software, failure of any e-mail or entry to be received by Sponsor/Administrator on account of technical problems or traffic congestion on the Internet or at any web site, any combination thereof, or otherwise, including any injury or damage to entrant's or any other person's computer related to or resulting from participation or downloading any materials in the Sweepstakes. CAUTION: ANY ATTEMPT BY AN ENTRANT TO DELIBERATELY DAMAGE ANY WEB SITE OR UNDERMINE THE LEGITIMATE OPERATION OF THE SWEEPSTAKES MAY BE A VIOLATION OF CRIMINAL AND CIVIL LAWS AND SHOULD SUCH AN ATTEMPT BE MADE, SPONSOR/ADMINISTRATOR RESERVE THE RIGHT TO SEEK DAMAGES FROM ANY SUCH PERSON TO THE FULLEST EXTENT PERMITTED BY LAW.

9. Winners List: A list with prizewinner information will be available by 8/15/02 at the website where you entered the sweepstakes (through the sweepstakes link), or by sending a stamped self-addressed envelope after 8/15/02 to: Ford Supercharged Sweepstakes, Winner's List, P.O. Box 698, Dana Point, CA 92629-0698.

10.Sponsor: Ford Motor Company, One American Road, Dearborn, MI 48126 (the "Sponsor").

11. Administrator: Primedia Specialty Group, Inc., 6420 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90048-5515 (the "Administrator").

the list 2002

model	price	engine (note 1)	speeds/ final drive	dry wt. (lb.)	seat height (in.)	verdict
APRILIA 110 LONDONDERRY COURT SUITE 130 WOODSTOCK, GA 30188; 770/592-2261 WWW.APRILIA.COM						
RSV Mille R	$17,299	l-c 8v 998 V-twin	6/chain	403	32.3	More power, high-spec suspension highlight R model
RSV Mille	$13,499	l-c 8v 998 V-twin	6/chain	407	32.3	Updated last year, a credible Superbike contender
RST1000 Futura	$12,999	l-c 8v 998 V-twin	6/chain	462	32.3	Radical styling, all-day comfort, fast…what do ya want?
SL1000 Falco R	$10,999	l-c 8v 998 V-twin	6/chain	418	32.1	Graphics-only updates to semistandard Falco
ETV1000 Caponord	$10,999	l-c 8v 998 V-twin	6/chain	474	32.3	Much-anticipated big trailie could kick R-GS's behind
RS250	$8569	l-c 2st 249 V-twin	6/chain	295	33.0	Track-only supertool is a special-order item
RS50	$3549	l-c 2st 50 single	6/chain	196	31.9	Join the GP grid at every stoplight; fun but very slow
BMW 300 CHESTNUT RIDGE ROAD WOODCLIFF LAKE, NJ 07677; 201/307-4000 WWW.BMWUSA.COM						
K1200LT Elite	$22,500	l-c 16v 1171 inline-four	5/shaft	796	30.3	Elite version has all the bells and whistles
K1200LT	$16,990	l-c 16v 1171 inline-four	5/shaft	788	30.3	BMW's take on luxo-touring; Custom and Std. versions
K1200RS	$16,990	l-c 16v 1171 inline-four	6/shaft	586	30.3	Restyled with comfier ergos, I-ABS. Heavy but fast
R1150RT	$16,290	a/o-c 4v 1130 opposed-twin	6/shaft	563	30.7	New fairing and long-awaited 1130cc engine/trans
R1200C Montana	$15,990	a/o-c 4v 1170 opposed-twin	5/shaft	482	29.1	Wild West meets Kraftwerk. Who asked this question?
R1100S	$15,690	a/o-c 4v 1085 opposed-twin	6/shaft	487	29.9	Underappreciated sport-R last to keep 1085cc engine
R1150RS	$15,400	a/o-c 4v 1130 opposed-twin	6/shaft	494	30.5	Original Oilhead mildly updated; old suspension
R1150GS Adventure	$15,200	a/o-c 4v 1130 opposed-twin	6/shaft	511	35.1	A massively butched up GS with dirt tires
R1200C Stiletto	$15,100	a/o-c 4v 1170 opposed-twin	5/shaft	482	29.1	Wrapped in juicy carbon fiber and sprayed black
R1200C	$14,590	a/o-c 4v 1170 opposed-twin	5/shaft	482	29.1	Basic BMW cruiser could be V-Rod's cousin, no?
R1150GS	$14,500	a/o-c 4v 1130 opposed-twin	6/shaft	530	33.1	A staff favorite; no changes for '02 (and that's just fine)
R1150R	$9990	a/o-c 4v 1130 opposed-twin	6/shaft	492	31.5	Restyled (and lovely) Roadster; ABS is $2200 option
F650CS	$8690	l-c 4v 649 single	5/belt	N/A	30.7	New model for new riders, with accessories galore
F650GS Dakar	$8690	l-c 4v 649 single	5/chain	387	31.5	Set up for real off-road action with real off-road tires
F650GS	$8190	l-c 4v 649 single	5/chain	395	30.7	ABS is a $500 option on BMW's entry-level thumper
BUELL 3700 WEST JUNEAU AVENUE MILWAUKEE, WI 53201; 414/343-8400 WWW.BUELL.COM						
Thunderbolt S3T	$12,495	a-c 4v 1203 V-twin	5/belt	465	31.5	Standard S3 retired but bagger remains unchanged
X1W White Lightning	$11,395	a-c 4v 1203 V-twin	5/belt	440	31.0	Massively tweaked Sporty mill is all about top end now
Lightning X1	$10,995	a-c 4v 1203 V-twin	5/belt	440	31.0	Middle-boy sport model; an axe or stiletto?
Firebolt XB9R	$9995	a-c 4v 984 V-twin	5/belt	385	30.5	Lots of new ideas here; execution will be everything
Cyclone M2	$8995	a-c 4v 1203 V-twin	5/belt	435	31.0	Maybe the best all-around Buell; makes most torque
Blast!	$4395	a-c 2v 492 single	5/belt	360	25.5/27.5	Entry-level basher unchanged for '02; two seat heights
DUCATI 237 WEST PARKWAY POMPTON PLAINS, NJ 07444; 973/839-2600 WWW.DUCATIUSA.COM						
998 Bostrom	$22,695	l-c 8v 998 V-twin	6/chain	412	31.1	Order now as only 155 B-boy reps are to be made
998	$17,695	l-c 8v 998 V-twin	6/chain	436	31.1	Enter the *Testastretta*. Will we miss the 996?
ST4s	$15,195	l-c 8v 996 V-twin	6/chain	467	32.3	Huge improvements from better suspension, 996cc
748R/S	$14,795	l-c 8v 748 V-twin	6/chain	423	31.1	Not a *Testastretta*, but extremely serious
748	$13,495	l-c 8v 748 V-twin	6/chain	423	31.1	Base 748 will still get your heart pumping
Monster S4	$12,995	l-c 8v 916 V-twin	6/chain	423	31.5	Mega power in ST4 chassis; is there a 996 waiting?
ST2	$11,795	l-c 4v 944 V-twin	6/chain	460	32.3	Son-of-Paso stays the course, price continues down
Supersport 900	$11,395	a-c 4v 904 V-twin	6/chain	414	32.1	Half-fairing versions gone; still controversially styled
Monster 900i.e.	$11,095	a-c 4v 904 V-twin	6/chain	407	31.4	Minor tweaks to the essential Monster
900 Sport	$9995	a-c 4v 904 V-twin	6/chain	414	32.1	New cost-cutter SS with big engine and dual discs
Supersport 750	$9195	a-c 4v 748 V-twin	5/chain	403	32.1	Same as 900 but for a cog in the box; no half-faired
Monster 750i.e.	$8395	a-c 4v 748 V-twin	5/chain	394	31.3	Injection comes to the 750, otherwise unchanged
750 Sport	$7995	a-c 4v 748 V-twin	5/chain	398	32.1	Underdog opening shot; cheap in the wrong places
Monster 620i.e.	$6995	a-c 4v 620 V-twin	5/chain	389	31.3	More cubes, injection for the entry-level Duck
HARLEY-DAVIDSON 3700 WEST JUNEAU AVENUE MILWAUKEE, WI 53201; 414/343-4056 WWW.HARLEY-DAVIDSON.COM						
Ultra Classic E-Glide	$19,185	a-c 4v 1450 V-twin	5/belt	788	27.3	Top-shelf tourer has everything but quick reflexes
Heritage Springer	$17,295	a-c 4v 1450 V-twin	5/belt	716	27.3	More exposed springs than a cheap hotel mattress
V-Rod	$16,995	l-c 8v 1130 V-twin	5/belt	596	26.0	Kick-ass power cruiser with Porsche power. Woo-hoo!
Heritage Softail Classic	$16,555	a-c 4v 1450 V-twin	5/belt	696	25.4	Arguably the classic-cruiser template; fairly refined
Softail Deuce	$16,555	a-c 4v 1450 V-twin	5/belt	645	26.0	Factory custom breaks the Milwaukee mold
Electra Glide Classic	$16,220	a-c 4v 1450 V-twin	5/belt	776	27.3	Big tourer with max customizing potential
Road Glide	$16,060	a-c 4v 1450 V-twin	5/belt	731	26.9	Touring chassis, sleek frame-mount fairing…very cool
Springer Softail	$15,995	a-c 4v 1450 V-twin	5/belt	653	25.8	Springer fork mated to sleeker styling than Heritage
Dyna Wide Glide	$15,950	a-c 4v 1450 V-twin	5/belt	612	26.8	A Willie G favorite; 21-inch front wheel, apehangers
Fat Boy	$15,795	a-c 4v 1450 V-twin	5/belt	666	25.5	In the land of bratwurst, fat is phat
Road King	$15,790	a-c 4v 1450 V-twin	5/belt	723	27.3	It's good to be the King. (A classic style still selling well)
Night Train	$14,950	a-c 4v 1450 V-twin	5/belt	630	25.2	We used to drink this stuff. Graduated to Brew 102
Dyna T-Sport	$14,895	a-c 4v 1450 V-twin	5/belt	642	27.9	Sport-touring in the H-D idiom; curious but good
Dyna Low Rider	$14,795	a-c 4v 1450 V-twin	5/belt	614	26.5	Built for the slight of inseam, choppy ride results
Dyna Super Glide Sport	$13,895	a-c 4v 1450 V-twin	5/belt	619	27.2	Taller legs, sporty ergos; a capable and fun Dyna
Electra Glide Std.	$13,995	a-c 4v 1450 V-twin	5/belt	758	27.3	Base-model tourer ready for customizing
Softail Standard	$12,535	a-c 4v 1450 V-twin	5/belt	630	26.1	The bike that launched a thousand customs
Dyna Super Glide	$11,895	a-c 4v 1450 V-twin	5/belt	612	26.5	Lowest-cost TC88 H-D is the proverbial blank slate
Sportster 1200	$8995	a-c 4v 1200 V-twin	5/belt	491	28.9	Sport and Custom versions also; tolerable performance
Sportster 883R	$6695	a-c 4v 883 V-twin	5/belt	489	28.0	Orange-and-black paint on standard 883. Cute
Sportster 883	$5695	a-c 4v 883 V-twin	5/belt	489	28.0	Basic entry-level barge. Vibey, slow, ready for a remake
HONDA 1919 TORRANCE BOULEVARD TORRANCE, CA 90501; 310/783-2000 WWW.HONDAMOTORCYCLE.COM						
Gold Wing	$17,699	l-c 12v 1832 opposed-six	5/shaft	792	29.1	Go whomp on one of these and say you're not smitten!
VTX1800S	$13,199	l-c 6v 1795 V-twin	5/shaft	705	27.3	New spoke-wheel version gets deep-fendered look
Valkyrie	$13,099	l-c 12v 1520 opposed-six	5/shaft	681	28.9	Last Valky standing, and it's still a rocket ride
VTX1800R	$12,999	l-c 6v 1795 V-twin	5/shaft	739	27.3	R does not mean Race, but Retro…got it?
VTX1800C	$12,499	l-c 6v 1795 V-twin	5/shaft	705	27.3	Original VTX is still the best looking (we think)
ST1100/ABS	$11,899	l-c 16v 1084 V-four	5/shaft	635	31.5	Last chance for ST before stunning ST1300 debuts
CBR1100XX	$10,999	l-c 16v 1137 inline-four	6/chain	492	31.9	Beautiful new pearl color for '02, otherwise unchanged
RC51	$10,999	l-c 8v 999 V-twin	6/chain	430	32.3	Detail refinements for Nicky and Colin's favorite tool
CBR954RR	$10,599	l-c 16v 954 inline-four	6/chain	370	32.1	Bore job to wrest literbike crown from GSX-R1000
Interceptor	$9999	l-c 16v 781 V-four	6/chain	472	31.7	Dramatically restyled, VTEC power; but porkomatic
Shadow Aero	$8999	l-c 6v 1099 V-twin	5/shaft	615	28.5	Art-deco styling, offset-crank V-twin, typically Honda
Super Hawk	$8999	l-c 8v 996 V-twin	6/chain	426	31.9	Oft-ignored but gratifying all-around twin
CBR600F4i	$8199	l-c 16v 599 inline-four	6/chain	370	31.7	Sharper than F4 but a better all-arounder? Close call

CONVENTIONS

note 1: cooling medium (a-c=air-cooled, l-c=liquid-cooled, a/o-c=air- and oil-cooled); total number of valves (4v), displacement in cc; number of cylinders and configuration (single, inline-three, opposed-twin, V-twin)

BACK ISSUES

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Answers

Send your questions to *Motorcyclist*, Attn: Answers, 6420 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90048-5515; fax them to (323) 782-2372; or e-mail us at mcmail@primedia.com. Time doesn't permit personal replies and the editors reserve the right to edit all letters, which must be exclusive to *Motorcyclist*.

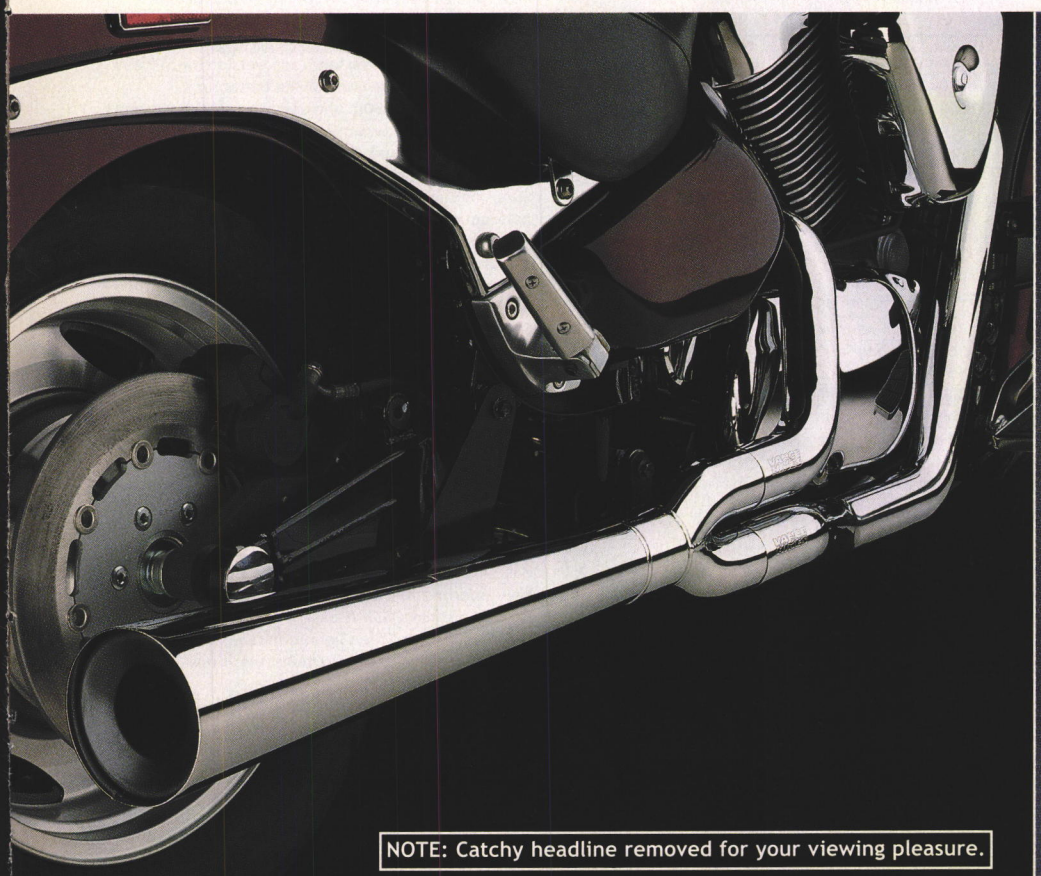
SLIPPERY SLIMEY

I recently had the 600-mile service performed on my 2002 Kawasaki ZX-9R at the dealership where I purchased the motorcycle. I informed the service manager I had already replaced the oil and filter, using Golden Spectro 4, 10W-40. The service manager informed me I should be using Kawasaki-brand 10W-40 oil because synthetic oil will not allow the rings to seat properly, and I would then have a motorcycle that would burn oil. The service manager said I should use this oil for the first 15,000 miles. After 15,000 miles, I would then have properly seated rings, and I could use a synthetic oil. I had an '88 Honda Hurricane with 103,000 miles and have a Honda CBR600F2 with 148,000 miles and have had no problems. Am I being told a story so I will purchase Kawasaki motor oil from the dealership?

Larry Johnson
Tujunga, CA

KEVIN WING

Quite a story, that. On modern motorcycles—and in cars, for that matter—the true break-in period is astonishingly short. Experts say full ring seating has taken place completely within that first service window, so that by 600 miles you're in no danger of glazing the cylinder walls by switching to synthetic. (The fact that a great many cars come with synthetics from the factory should tell you something, and many require no service at all *before 10,000 miles.) The next time you see him, ask your service manager why Kawasaki doesn't say a word about break-in oil in the owner's or service manual. In fact, Kawasaki says only to use an appropriate type of oil (a lube meeting API SE, SF or SG ratings, or the newer SH or SJ ratings with the JASO MA [motorcycle] subrating) in the proper viscosity range. Stay away from ultralow viscosities (0W-30, for example) and avoid oils with the Energy Conserving starburst on the label, because these contain friction modifiers that* may *damage the clutch plates.*



NOTE: Catchy headline removed for your viewing pleasure.

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the list 2002

model	price	engine (note 1)	speeds/ final drive	dry wt. (lb.)	seat height (in.)	verdict
Shadow Sabre	$8199	l-c 6v 1099 V-twin	5/shaft	573	27.2	Sleeker Shadow for the hot-rod-inclined
919	$7999	l-c 16v 919 inline-four	6/chain	427	31.5	CBR900RR engine in naked chassis; an FZ1 it ain't
Shadow Spirit	$7999	l-c 6v 1099 V-twin	5/shaft	553	28.7	Original VT1100 resurrected for the budget-minded
Magna	$7499	l-c 16v 748 V-four	5/chain	505	28.0	V-four power and (slightly) dated styling; unique
Shadow A.C.E. Deluxe	$5999	l-c 6v 745 V-twin	5/chain	505	27.6	For that full-fendered look without those filling cubes
Shadow Spirit 750	$5999	l-c 6v 745 V-twin	5/chain	496	26.6	Cut-rate Shadow is handsome if modestly quick
Nighthawk 750	$5799	a-c 16v 747 inline-four	5/chain	463	30.9	Smooth and nearly featureless; still loved by many
XR650L	$5499	a-c 4v 644 single	5/chain	324	37.0	Light but old d-p mount; waiting for CRF trickledown
Shadow VLX	$4999	l-c 6v 583 V-twin	4/chain	452	25.6	Budget cruiser for the coupon clipper
Nighthawk	$3399	a-c 4v 234 vertical-twin	5/chain	287	29.3	A little something for Great Aunt Martha, yes?
Rebel	$2999	a-c 4v 234 vertical-twin	5/chain	306	26.6	Miniature cruiser is well built but arthritic
KAWASAKI 9950 JERONIMO ROAD IRVINE, CA 92618; 949/770-0400 WWW.KAWASAKI.COM						
Vulcan 1500 Nomad Fi	$12,999	l-c 8v 1470 V-twin	5/shaft	739	28.3	Only Nomad left now that carb version is gone
Voyager XII	$12,299	l-c 16v 1196 inline-four	5/shaft	728	29.7	Old enough to vote *and* drink (*and* enjoy it)
Vulcan 1500 Drifter	$11,799	l-c 8v 1470 V-twin	5/shaft	668	29.1	Big old fenders, developed chassis and evergreen mill
Vulcan Mean Streak	$10,999	l-c 8v 1470 V-twin	5/shaft	637	27.6	New perf.-cruiser entry; best handling of the bunch
ZX-12R	$10,999	l-c 16v 1198 inline-four	6/chain	463	31.9	Fast-boy 12R receives numerous updates this year
ZZ-R1200	$10,499	l-c 16v 1052 inline-four	6/chain	n/a	n/a	So long, ZX-11; new ZZ-R takes to sport-touring
Vulcan 1500 Classic	$9999	l-c 8v 1470 V-twin	5/shaft	659	29.1	Fi version is $600 more; worth the dough
ZX-9R	$9499	l-c 16v 899 inline-four	6/chain	404	31.9	Many small revisions could close gap to R1/954/GSX-R
ZX-7R	$8799	l-c 16v 748 inline-four	6/chain	448	31.1	Still struts on the track, but surely a new one's coming
Concours	$8199	l-c 16v 997 inline-four	6/shaft	595	31.1	Aging sport-tourer still has fans; unchanged for '02
ZRX1200R	$7899	l-c 16v 1164 inline-four	5/chain	492	31.1	Lawson-rep. paint and new-found punch; lovin' it!
ZX-6R	$7699	l-c 16v 599 inline-four	6/chain	377	32.3	Lower price on what may be the best all-around 600
Vulcan 800 Drifter	$7499	l-c 8v 805 V-twin	5/chain	547	29.9	Looks like the 1500, handles better
ZX-6	$6999	l-c 16v 599 inline-four	6/chain	430	30.7	Elderly ZX can be had for cheap; still a thrilling mill
Vulcan 800 Classic	$6799	l-c 8v 805 V-twin	5/chain	516	27.8	Best looking of the non-Drifter 800s by far
Vulcan 750	$6099	l-c 8v 749 V-twin	5/shaft	483	28.9	So '80s you can almost hear Duran Duran
Vulcan 800	$5999	l-c 8v 805 V-twin	5/chain	496	28.0	Got that full-fendered look and a stout heart
ZR-7S	$5999	a-c 8v 738 inline-four	5/chain	445	31.5	Sticks to '80s tech, and often feels like it
Ninja 500R	$5099	l-c 8v 498 vertical-twin	6/chain	388	30.5	No changes for '02, thanks; number one in a field of two
KLR650	$4999	l-c 4v 651 single	5/chain	337	35.0	Big-bore "killer" a superb value among d-p thumpers
Vulcan 500 LTD	$4699	l-c 8v 498 vertical-twin	5/chain	496	28.1	Ninja 500R-powered cruiser; plenty quick
KLR250	$4149	l-c 4v 249 single	6/chain	258	33.7	Little KLR lacks punch of 650 (no kidding!) but still OK
Super Sherpa	$3999	a-c 4v 249 single	6/chain	249	32.7	Very basic, pretty cheap, fits on your RV
Ninja 250R	$2999	l-c 8v 248 vertical-twin	6/chain	304	29.3	Tiny tot tempting tool for terrorizing townsfolk
Eliminator 125	$2499	a-c 4v 124 single	5/chain	282	26.8	New one-lunger fine for the country, small pilots
KTM 1119 MILAN AVENUE AMHERST, OH 44001; 440/985-3553 WWW.KTMUSA.COM						
LC4 Adventure	$8198	l-c 4v 625 single	6/chain	340	35.4	Tall, expensive, take it anywhere
LC4 640 Supermoto	$7248	l-c 4v 625 single	6/chain	n/a	n/a	Just tape your license to the outside of your helmet
LC4 640	$6998	l-c 4v 625 single	6/chain	340	35.4	Real Paris-Dakar pedigree; Six Days rep. available
Duke II	N/A	l-c 4v 625 single	6/chain	320	33.8	Bad boy! Bad boy! Go to your room
MOTO GUZZI 109 SMOKEHILL LANE SUITE 190 WOODSTOCK, GA 30188; 678/238-0902 WWW.MOTOGUZZI-US.COM						
V11 Le Mans	$12,690	a-c 4v 1064 V-twin	6/shaft	479	31.0	Recalls MG's glory days; Tenni-rep. version for sale, too
V11 Sport	$11,990	a-c 4v 1064 V-twin	6/shaft	472	31.0	Naked, quirky, vibey…and all the better for it
California EV	$11,990	a-c 4v 1064 V-twin	5/shaft	553	30.3	Traditional cruiser; 80th anniversary model tours, too
California Spl Sport	$10,990	a-c 4v 1064 V-twin	5/shaft	552	29.0	Improved chassis dynamics but same engine
California Stone	$8790	a-c 4v 1064 V-twin	5/shaft	541	29.0	Would you call your bike a Stone on purpose? Oh, man
MuZ 771 FENTRESS BOULEVARD, SUITE 22 DAYTONA BEACH, FL 32114; 386/274-1948 WWW.MOTORRADNA.COM						
Skorpion Traveller	$6495	l-c 5v 660 single	6/chain	415	31.0	Sure, you can go places on a thumper; has bags, too!
Baghira Black Panther	$6195	l-c 5v 660 single	6/chain	345	34.5	Assiduously butch motard; weird *and* wonderful
Baghira Street Moto	$6195	l-c 5v 660 single	6/chain	345	n/a	Panther with (slightly) toned-down styling
Skorpion Tour	$4995	l-c 5v 660 single	6/chain	383	31.0	Yamaha-powered Tour is basic naked bike
125SX/SM/R125	$3495	l-c 4v 124 single	6/chain	295	n/a	SX is dual-sport, SM a motard; R125 a naked thumper
MV AGUSTA 2300 MARYLAND ROAD WILLOW GROVE, PA 19090; 215/830-3300 WWW.MVAGUSTAUSA.COM						
F4 Senna	$24,995	l-c 16v 750 inline-four	6/chain	414	31.1	Special Ayrton Senna-replica; mechanically as F4S
F4 SPR	$22,695	l-c 16v 750 inline-four	6/chain	423	31.1	Hopped-up version with race exhaust
F4 Strada	$18,895	l-c 16v 750 inline-four	6/chain	423	31.1	Original F4 gets power boost
SUZUKI 3251 EAST IMPERIAL HIGHWAY BREA, CA 92821; 714/996-7040 WWW.SUZUKI.COM						
GSX1300R Hayabusa	$10,849	l-c 16v 1299 inline-four	6/chain	480	31.7	Bulbous is beautiful, baby; torque is the game here
GSX-R1000	$10,399	l-c 16v 988 inline-four	6/chain	374	32.7	Brilliant, insanely fast, yet totally livable; a milestone
1500 Intruder LC	$9999	a/o-c 6v 1462 V-twin	5/shaft	652	27.6	Huge cruiser for those who like their meals super-sized
TL1000R	$9599	l-c 8v 996 V-twin	6/chain	434	32.5	Last refuge for the full-spec TL engine…sob
GSX-R750	$9449	l-c 16v 749 inline-four	6/chain	365	32.7	Made-for-Mladin updates for '02
DL1000	$8899	l-c 8v 996 V-twin	6/chain	456	32.7	If your name's Gerhard, you'll love this one
1400 Intruder	$8349	a/o-c 6v 1360 V-twin	5/shaft	535	28.9	Amazing longevity, pokeadelic engine
GSX-R600	$7999	l-c 16v 599 inline-four	6/chain	359	32.7	Basically unchanged; Telefonica scheme for $350 more
Bandit 1200S	$7399	a/o-c 16v 1157 inline-four	5/chain	485	31.1	Half-faired, refined Bandito is a great all-arounder
750 Katana	$7299	a/o-c 16v 749 inline-four	6/chain	465	31.1	Jellybean styling, GSX-R-based motivation
Bandit 1200	$6999	a/o-c 16v 1157 inline-four	5/chain	471	31.1	Naked 1200 is and feels lighter than S
Intruder Volusia	$6599	a/o-c 8v 805 V-twin	5/shaft	526	27.6	Midsize Intruder remade in more "traditional" idiom
800 Intruder	$6399	a/o-c 8v 805 V-twin	5/shaft	443	27.6	Another Methuselah motorcycle
600 Katana	$6299	a/o-c 16v 599 inline-four	6/chain	458	30.9	Smaller jellybean, same flavor (that would be vanilla)
SV650S	$6199	l-c 8v 645 V-twin	6/chain	372	31.7	Half-faired SV is a cheap treat; loads of potential
Marauder	$5999	a/o-c 8v 805 V-twin	5/chain	456	27.6	Hot-rod licks, uneven styling, good dynamics
Bandit 600S	$5849	a/o-c 16v 599 inline-four	6/chain	458	31.1	Mini Bandit lacks low-end punch of 1200
SV650	$5799	l-c 8v 645 V-twin	6/chain	363	31.7	Adjustable preload on the fork, otherwise the same
DR650SE	$5449	a/o-c 4v 644 single	5/chain	324	34.8/33.0	Capable d-p mount; more dirt worthy than KLR
DR-Z400S	$5449	l-c 4v 398 single	5/chain	291	36.8	A real dirt bike with lights; worth the commitment
GS500E	$4399	a-c 4v 487 vertical-twin	5/chain	381	31.1	Seasoned beginner mount can't be broken
Savage	$4299	a-c 4v 652 single	5/belt	352	27.6	Savage, at the heart, is a pussycat; good for beginners

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How-To: Commanding Power

BOY, WON'T NOREM BE SURPRISED. HE'LL COME home from his Subaru-induced vacation, wobbly kneed and barely able to control himself around his new long-term bike, the mighty GSX-R1000. Worse, he'll be cranky that we've fitted a Power Commander without his assistance. Computer-lad Norem loves this kind of thing, you see, and we're sure he'd have salient commentary on this installation. ("The male connectors always go into the female connectors, except in West Hollywood," which is where, incidentally, he lives.)

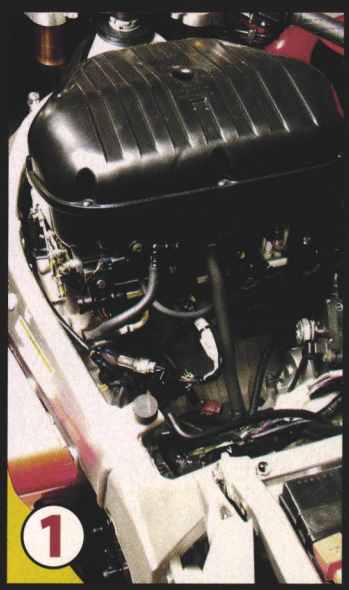
Anyway, even Norem could install a Power Commander (PC), it's so easy. Although you don't really need to, removing the tank (1)—as opposed to just propping it up—will make the job considerably easier. Start by placing the PC module in a convenient location; most of the time it goes into the bin under the passenger seat (2). You don't want to bury the box elsewhere in the motorcycle because you'll want access to the serial port (for loading the initial and, later, revised maps), and in any event it should be protected from vibration and heat.

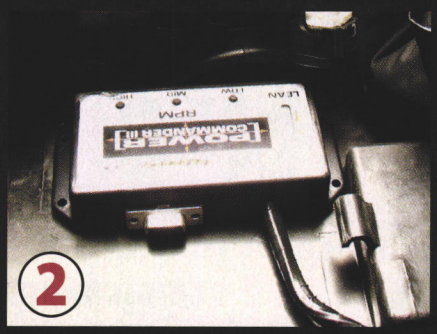
Snake the wiring loom around the rear subframe and under the fuel-tank crossmember (3). You'll notice the PC harness terminates in two plugs, a male and a female, exactly like the standard harness has. This is the genius of the system—the crux of the installation is to plug the male PC connector into the stock female connector, and the PC female into the stock male. You'll also notice much of the PC loom is made up of jumper wires—the wires that lead directly from the male to the female plug shown here. That's because the PC doesn't need access to all the wires to do its job.

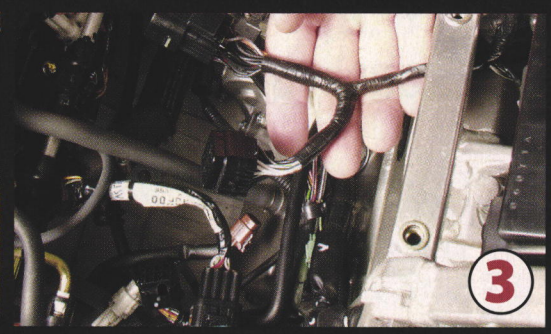
Look around above the Suzuki's transmission and find the 16-pin connector (4). Don't worry about getting the wrong one—you can't. There aren't any other 16-pin connectors that could possibly be made to join together on this motorcycle. Rotate the connector until you find the locking peg (5), and insert your fingernail or a small screwdriver *under* the tab and pull up. This will release the two halves. Pull gently and they'll come apart.

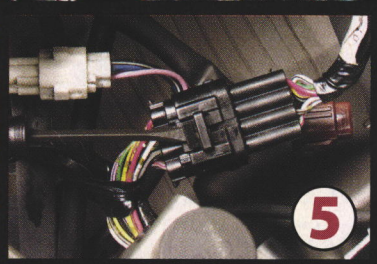
While you've got a moment, inspect both sides of the connector for broken or bent pins and make sure the weather seal is uncompromised (6). Grab the opposite-gender connections (if you need help determining these, call Josh Norem at home), align the locking mechanism and slide it home (7). Listen or feel for the click and give the connector an easy tug to be sure the pins are fully seated and the latch is locked. Repeat this procedure with the other pair.

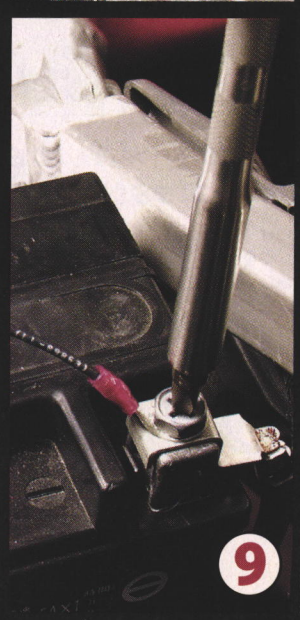
Now it's just housekeeping. Tie the PC harness to the stock harness with a plastic tie (8) and generally tidy up where the PC wiring snakes through the bike. Connect the ground lead to the battery (9), and the physical part of the installation is complete. Fire up your laptop, connect the serial cable between it and the PC, and load the recommended map. When you power up, the LEDs on the PC will do a little dance (if they don't, check your wiring again, particularly the battery ground) and, once the engine is running, you should see the bar graph on the box correspond to movement of the throttle. Next month, when Norem returns, he'll show you how to overclock the Power Commander for a few extra horsepower. (Just kidding.)











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the list 2002

model	price	engine (note 1)	speeds/ final drive	dry wt. (lb.)	seat height (in.)	verdict
DR200SE	$3899	a-c 4v 199 single	5/chain	249	31.9	Cute little dirtlet for campground carving
GZ250	$2999	a-c 2v 249 single	5/chain	302	27.8	Nice-handling toy cruiser in need of ponies....soon
TRIUMPH 385 WALT SANDERS MEMORIAL DRIVE NEWMAN, GA 30265; 678/854-2010 WWW.TRIUMPH.CO.UK						
Trophy 1200	$11,999	l-c 16v 1180 inline-four	6/chain	518	31.1	Massive ST with torque-laden four; last days?
Daytona	$10,999	l-c 12v 955 inline-three	6/chain	414	32.1	Amazingly potent, light; less flawed than ever
Sprint ST	$10,799	l-c 12v 955 inline-three	6/chain	456	31.5	New 955 engine for the ST, but no suspension updates
Tiger	$10,799	l-c 12v 955 inline-three	6/chain	474	33.1/33.8	Updated engine puts it in contention with R-GS
Speed Triple	$10,499	l-c 12v 955 inline-three	6/chain	416	32.1	Garish colors, die-cast 955 engine with more hp
Sprint RS	$9499	l-c 12v 955 inline-three	6/chain	438	31.7	Half-faired version of the ST; still looking for a niche
Thunderbird	$8999	l-c 12v 885 inline-three	6/chain	485	30.5	Original (new) Triumph cruiser; hanging in there
TT600	$8299	l-c 16v 599 inline-four	6/chain	374	31.9	More revisions (and more power) for troubled TT
Bonneville America	$7999	a/o-c 8v 790 parallel-twin	5/chain	497	28.3	Custom-cruiser styling applied to the sleek Bonnie
Bonneville	$6999	a/o-c 8v 790 parallel-twin	5/chain	451	31.5	Big hit for Triumph, absolutely looks the part
VICTORY 2100 HIGHWAY 55 MEDINA, MN 55340; 763/417-8650 WWW.POLARISINDUSTRIES.COM						
V92TC Deluxe	$16,199	a/o-c 8v 1507 V-twin	5/belt	727	28.3	Top Victory gets updated engine and touring stuff
V92TC	$14,999	a/o-c 8v 1507 V-twin	5/belt	720	28.3	Slightly stripped version of TC, much improved
V92C Deluxe	$14,899	a/o-c 8v 1507 V-twin	5/belt	727	28.3	Short-wheelbase chassis has standard bags and 'shield
V92C	$13,699	a/o-c 8v 1507 V-twin	5/belt	669	29.5	Now the basic model; has the engine/trans updates
YAMAHA 6555 KATELLA AVENUE CYPRESS, CA 90630; 714/761-7300 WWW.YAMAHA-MOTOR.COM						
Royal Star Venture	$16,399	l-c 16v 1294 V-four	5/shaft	807	29.5	Sole remaining Royal Star and Yam's only big tourer
Road Star Silverado	$12,399	a-c 8v 1602 V-twin	5/belt	710	27.9	Silverado adds bags, chrome, conchos and 'screen
Road Star Warrior	$11,999	a-c 8v 1670 V-twin	5/belt	606	28.1	Big-cube cruiser to take on V-Rod and VTX; good luck
Road Star	$10,999	a-c 8v 1602 V-twin	5/belt	677	27.9	All-black version of the RS called Midnight, $800 more
V-Max	$10,899	l-c 16v 1198 V-four	5/shaft	580	30.1	OK, this time we mean it; the last hurrah for Mr. Max
YZF-R1	$10,299	l-c 20v 998 inline-four	6/chain	382	32.0	Maybe not the quantum leap as in '98, but potent
V Star 1100 Silverado	$9299	a-c 4v 1063 V-twin	5/shaft	639	27.9	New Silverado package adds semitouring goodies
FZ1	$8499	l-c 20v 998 inline-four	6/chain	455	32.3	New colors for '02 for our fave naked bike
V Star 1100 Classic	$8199	a-c 4v 1063 V-twin	5/shaft	599	27.9	So much better than the old Viragos it's not funny
YZF-R6	$7999	l-c 16v 599 inline-four	6/chain	365	32.2	Unchanged for '02 but, no doubt, still a winner
V Star 1100 Custom	$7899	a-c 4v 1063 V-twin	5/shaft	571	27.2	Custom means hot-rod style; an amazingly good buy
YZF600R	$6999	l-c 16v 599 inline-four	6/chain	416	31.7	Smooth, capable and (sadly) overlooked
V Star Silverado	$6899	a-c 4v 649 V-twin	5/shaft	544	28.0	Same Silverado package applied to the 650
V Star Classic	$5899	a-c 4v 649 V-twin	5/shaft	600	28.0	Inexpensive but not cheap, a fine entry-level cruiser
V Star Custom	$5599	a-c 4v 649 V-twin	5/shaft	474	27.4	Yeoman cruiser looks good and rides well
XT225	$3999	a-c 4v 223 single	6/chain	238	31.9	Inexpensive, easygoing, enough for most
TW200	$3599	a-c 2v 198 single	5/chain	260	31.1	Nothing new for this family-style trail bike
Virago 250	$3399	a-c 4v 249 V-twin	5/chain	302	27.0	Docile, forgiving, small yet still a hoot

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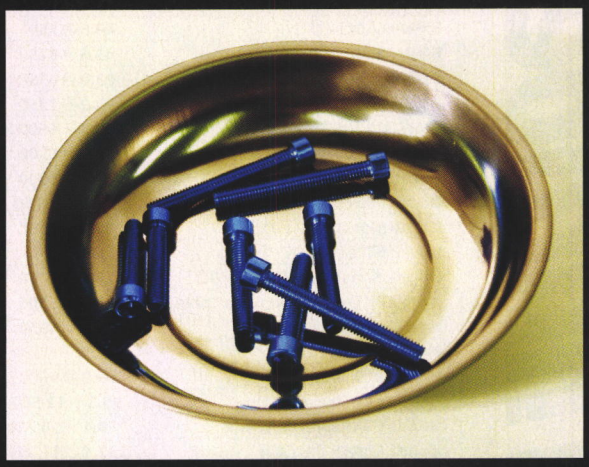
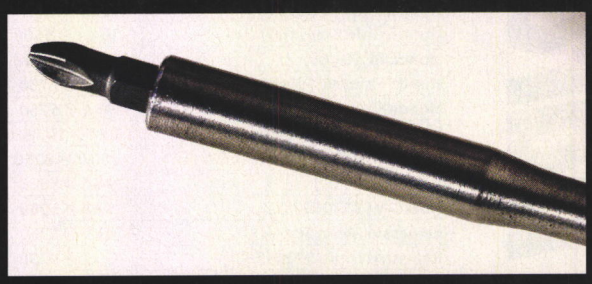
MAGNETS DO MORE THAN MAKE YOUR COMPASS work. They can simplify motorcycle maintenance. *Oh, get out!* Longtime mechanics (the gruff guys who refuse to be called technicians, thanks very much) love these kinds of gadgets because they save time and can save face for that inevitable oops. The near-ubiquitous "dog-dish" hardware pan ($10 at your local Sears) gives you a place to put steel hardware where it won't go flying; the magnet in the base holds the nuts and bolts in place as well as offering a way to stick the whole mess to your motorcycle lift or the side of your toolbox. It's much better than a muffin tin. And because even the most conscientious wrench will drop a screw now and again, it's wise to have a magnet on a stick. This telescoping magnet (again from Sears, $8) lets you root around for that carburetor float-bowl screw that just slipped out of your fingers. Finally, you should invest in magnetic-bit screwdrivers, which are available in a grand spectrum from dirt cheap at your neighborhood hardware store all the way up to the Snap-On ratcheting screwdriver with soft-grip handle system ($53 at 877/762-7661 or www.snapon.com).





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hard numbers

motorcycle	measured hp (@ rpm)	measured torque (ft.-lb. @ rpm)	corrected best 1/4 mi.* (sec. @ mph)	roll-ons 60–80 mph* (sec.)	wet weight (lb.)	ergos**	last*** tested
Aprilia RST1000 Futura ('01)	101.8 @ 9250	63.4 @ 7500	11.09 @ 123.0	4.52	535	28.1/22.8/5.5	1/02
Aprilia RSV Mille ('01)	108.5 @ 9250	66.9 @ 7250	10.68 @ 132.2	3.35	482	29.5/17.5/1.6	9/01
Aprilia SL1000 ('00)	110.4 @ 9500	69.3 @ 7100	10.99 @ 125.0	4.56	485		8/00
BMW F650CS ('02)	48.6 @ 7500	42.4 @ 5500	13.01 @ 97.71	4.77	428		6/02
BMW F650GS ('00)	43.5 @ 6250	40.3 @ 4500	13.76 @ 91.6	6.03	442		7/00
BMW K1200LT ('00)	83.0 @ 6750	75.7@ 5000	13.83 @ 98.7	9.42	866	25.0/22.7/11.6	2/01
BMW R1100S ('00)	92.2 @ 7250	70.9 @ 5750	12.67 @ 111.0	5.44	545		6/00
BMW R1150GS ('00)	79.7 @ 6500	72.2 @ 5500	12.84 @ 103.1	6.59	586		12/99
Buell S3 Thunderbolt ('99)	90.1 @ 6500	78.1 @ 6000	11.90 @ 113.2		514		10/98
Ducati 750 Sport ('01)	60.8 @ 8000	43.9 @ 6000	12.75 @ 103.3	5.57	431	28.9/17.3/1.7	6/01
Ducati 996 ('99)	109.8 @ 8750	69.6 @ 6750	10.61 @ 130.2	5.35	478		3/99
Ducati Monster S4 ('01)	98.9 @ 8750	63.5 @ 7000	11.20 @ 121.0	4.11	459	28.9/17.7/7.1	5/01
Ducati ST4s ('02)	107.8 @ 9000	66.7 @ 7000	10.74 @ 126.1	4.39	521	28.1/18.2/4.9	12/01
Ducati Supersport 900 i.e.('00)	77.5 @ 7750	59.3 @ 5750	11.99 @ 109.5	5.61	444		6/00
H-D FXDX Dyna Super Glide Sport ('99)	62.5 @ 5500	76.3 @ 3250	13.54 @ 96.5	5.82	651		11/98
H-D S.E. Road Glide ('00)	70.8 @ 5250	86.4 @ 2750	13.93 @ 93.1	6.71	828		5/00
H-D V-Rod ('02)	109.3 @ 8250	74.3 @ 7000	11.31 @ 114.95	4.05	620	24.7/30.1/14.4	4/02
Honda 919 ('02)	99.9 @ 9000	63.8 @ 7750	11.18 @ 120.7	3.59	485	26.7/18.2/9.3	3/02
Honda CBR600F4i ('01)	95.5 @ 12,500	42.6 @ 10,250	10.71 @ 126.7	4.12	435	27.7/17.8/4.9	8/01
Honda CBR929RR ('01)	128.4 @ 10,750	68.4 @ 8750	10.28 @ 135.9	2.98	442		4/01
Honda CBR954RR ('02)	132.1 @ 11,250	68.4 @ 8750	10.20 @ 139.0	2.70	439	28.7/17.6/3.3	6/02
Honda CBR1100XX ('97)	136.7 @ 9500	80.9 @ 7500	10.20 @ 134.5		556		2/97
Honda Gold Wing ('01)	104.1 @ 5500	109.9 @ 4250	12.78 @ 103.3	5.90	898	23.0/23.1/11.8	2/01
Honda RC51 ('00)	118.5 @ 9000	72.1 @ 7500	10.97 @ 128.2	4.94	489	28.3/16.6/1.7	8/00
Honda Shadow Spirit 750 ('01)	41.4 @ 5750	43.2 @ 3500	14.89 @ 86.7	9.15	523	25.2/27.1/12.8	4/01
Honda Valkyrie Interstate ('99)	97.1 @ 5750	97.3 @ 4500	12.76 @ 100.8	6.38	859		8/99
Honda VFR800F Interceptor ('02)	99.1 @ 10,750	54.2 @ 8750	11.26 @ 119.5	5.07	557	28.5/18.4/5.9	5/02
Honda VTR1000F Super Hawk ('00)	100.7 @ 8250	67.0 @ 6250	11.47 @ 119.4	5.00	480		6/00
Honda VTX ('02)	94.6 @ 5000	105.1 @ 3250	12.21 @ 107.48	4.12	758	25.5/28.3/13.7	4/02
Honda VTX1300S ('02)	60.3 @ 5000	77.4 @ 3000	13.72 @ 94.51	5.51	708		7/02
Kawasaki Mean Streak ('02)	63.7 @ 5750	72.8 @ 2500	13.43 @ 96.68	5.52	695	27.1/28.2/12.8	4/02
Kawasaki Ninja 500R ('01)	50.2 @ 9250	30.9 @ 7750	12.81 @ 101.2	7.05	443		10/01
Kawasaki Vulcan 1500 Classic FI ('00)	54.6 @ 5000	73.6 @ 2500	14.07 @ 92.6	9.43	727		9/00
Kawasaki W650 ('01)	44.2 @ 6750	37.7 @ 4250	13.75 @ 94.5	7.40	472		7/01
Kawasaki ZR-7S ('01)	65.5 @ 9250	43.8 @ 6000	12.59 @ 106.1	5.02	520		11/01
Kawasaki ZRX1200R ('01)	112.8 @ 8500	79.6 @ 6750	10.70 @ 125.8	3.20	544	26.1/18.1/9.4	7/01
Kawasaki ZX-6R Ninja ('01)	95.2 @ 12,500	43.6 @ 10,250	10.92 @ 124.4	4.39	435	27.8/17.6/4.0	8/01
Kawasaki ZX-9R Ninja ('02)	125.0@ 10,250	67.5 @ 9500	10.16 @ 138.28	2.98	472	29.3/18.1/3.4	6/02
Kawasaki ZX-12R Ninja ('00)	162.7 @ 10,000	93.7 @ 7500	9.96 @ 142.3	3.23	547	28.1/18.5/—	6/00
Kawasaki ZZ-R1200 ('02)	145.2 @ 9750	87.1 @ 4500	10.12 @ 136.90	3.20	609	28.5/18.0/6.6	6/02
Moto Guzzi California Special Sport ('02)	62.9 @ 6500	58.7 @ 5250	13.14 @ 98.64	6.56	572		2/02
Moto Guzzi V11 Sport ('00)	80.6 @ 7750	65.0 @ 5750	12.18 @ 110.9	5.14	546	28.8/17.2/5.7	10/00
MV Agusta F4 Strada ('00)	114.6 @ 12,750	52.6 @ 10,250	11.09 @ 128.0	4.86	480	31.0/17.7/0.2	9/00
Suzuki Bandit 600S ('00)	72.9 @ 10,750	38.6 @ 9000	12.59 @ 106.8	6.76	510		5/00
Suzuki Bandit 1200 ('01)	101.8 @ 8500	70.0 @ 4250	10.98 @ 121.9	3.38	530	31.0/17.7/0.2	7/01
Suzuki Bandit 1200S ('01)	101.6 @ 8250	71.8 @ 7250	11.15 @ 121.8	4.02	543	27.8/19.2/9.0	10/00
Suzuki GS500E ('01)	39.2 @ 8500	26.6 @ 7000	13.65 @ 95.5	8.52	424		10/01
Suzuki GSX1300R Hayabusa ('99)	156.1 @ 9500	99.0 @ 6750	10.34 @ 140.8	2.70	550		6/99
Suzuki GSX-R600 ('01)	100.5 @ 13,000	45.6 @ 10,750	10.69 @ 126.6	4.66	423	30.0/17.6/2.0	8/01
Suzuki GSX-R750 ('00)	123.0 @ 12,500	57.7 @ 10,000	10.26 @ 135.6	4.11	426	30.2/17.5/1.5	7/00
Suzuki GSX-R1000 ('02)	144.1 @ 10,250	75.9 @ 8250	9.89 @ 145.35	2.73	437	30.2/17.5/1.5	6/02
Suzuki SV650S ('01)	65.8 @ 9250	42.6 @ 7500	12.60 @ 109.4	5.13	428	28.2/18.3/4.4	1/01
Suzuki TL1000S ('00)	106.1 @ 8250	69.1 @ 6500	11.15 @ 121.1	4.61	487		6/00
Triumph Bonneville ('01)	56.8 @ 7250	42.1 @ 7000	13.57 @ 96.4	6.89	499		7/01
Triumph Daytona 955i ('02)	127.2 @ 10,750	66.3 @ 8750	10.54 @ 132.4	3.65	486	29.7/17.9/2.2	9/01
Triumph Legend TT ('00)	67.4 @ 7750	51.9 @ 4000	13.32 @ 96.7	5.87	522		8/00
Triumph Sprint RS ('00)	93.6 @ 9250	61.5 @ 5250	11.76 @ 110.4	4.77	512		6/00
Triumph Sprint ST ('01)	99.8 @ 9500	62.0 @ 5750	11.52 @ 117.03	4.16	547	28.2/18.1/6.0	1/02
Triumph TT600 ('02)	97.0 @ 12,750	41.8 @ 10,500	11.23 @ 123.20	4.61	455	27.5/16.5/5.2	4/02
Yamaha FJ1300 ('02)	126.2 @ 7750	88.5 @ 7000	11.02 @ 124.08	3.65	641	27.1/19.2/10.0	7/02
Yamaha FZ1 ('01)	117.4 @ 9500	70.9 @ 7250	10.57 @ 128.8	3.26	514	28.1/19.3/9.5	7/01
Yamaha Road Star ('99)	56.8 @ 4000	88.5 @ 2250	14.44 @ 88.9		740		7/99
Yamaha Royal Star Venture ('99)	81.7 @ 6000	79.7 @ 4500	13.66 @ 93.6	8.74	890		8/99
Yamaha V-Max ('97)	118.2 @ 8500	84.6 @ 6000	10.87 @ 124.0		616		1/97
Yamaha Warrior ('02)	76.3 @ 4500	97.9 @ 3500	12.51 @ 104.76	4.87	658	27.6/28.1/12.3	4/02
Yamaha YZF-R1 ('02)	136.8 @ 10,750	73.4 @ 8250	10.07 @ 142.13	2.69	441	29.1/17.0/1.7	6/02
Yamaha YZF-R6 ('01)	96.7 @ 12,500	42.1 @ 10,000	10.75 @ 127.6	4.24	426	27.4/16.7/2.9	8/01
Victory V92TC Deluxe ('02)	75.0 @ 5000	86.9 @ 3750	12.97 @ 100.24	4.86	771		4/02

* Performance with test-session weather conditions corrected to sea-level standard conditions (59 degrees F, 29.92 in. of mercury).

**Ergonomic measurements are as follows: distance from seat to bar/distance from seat to peg/effective handlebar rise.

***Months listed in italics are issues the motorcycle was tested in *Sport Rider*.

Test numbers used here are generated by the *Motorcyclist* staff using a Dynojet 150 or SuperFlow CycleDyn (noted in red) rear-wheel dynamometer, Intercomp SWII digital scale and Los Angeles County Raceway's quarter-mile strip utilizing a Chrondek timing system.

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by Tim Carrithers
Senior Editor

Listen To the Kid

MR. ANDERSON NEVER THOUGHT I'D GET HERE. AS MY high-school guidance counselor, his duty was clear: inhabit a selection of stunning cardigan sweaters, shovel Coffee-mate into his Taster's Choice, and extrude a steady stream of young impressionable minds into *sensible* employment. Medicine. Law. Accounting. Meatpacking. Was I *crazy*? Objection. Leading the witness. Five, maybe six people made the mastheads of those crazy motorcycle magazines. How could I—an underachiever cum laude, convicted of lifting every blessed thing I knew about Silas Marner from Cliffs Notes—cut that mustard? To be honest, my sophomoric thought process had risked only tenuous forays into reality. I mapped most of my career path from the saddle of a new Bultaco Astro at Gilroy Cycles. Exhaustive research conducted in showrooms all over town told me everything I needed to know.

The guys at *Cycle* magazine spent idyllic Southern California days wringing the h-e-double-hockey sticks out of MV Agustas, John Player Nortons and Combat Wombats. They wore Bates custom leathers, peeled from contented cows in the kindest possible way. Some were on a first-name basis with Kenny Roberts. *Cycle* staffers had astounding conversations with Kevin Cameron about quantum tunneling, the miracle of *desmodromic* valve gear, and why manhole covers are round. (If this is the first time the subject has come up, it's so they can't fall into the hole.)

Meanwhile, the beauty of my plan was that it really wasn't a plan at all. The cosmic dominoes between Gilroy High School and *Cycle* magazine would topple neatly into place if I wanted them to badly enough, and I wanted this, baby. I wanted it bad. OK, maybe not bad enough to shoulder the entire Protestant Work Ethic thing. I did not follow the footsteps of my ancestors, crossing 27.3 miles of frozen tundra before wood shop. I rode a Schwinn American (replete with two-speed kick-back rear hub), a Schwinn Supersport, then a Yamaha DT360. By high school I was beyond help. Bikes had always been my deal.

I set the course record with a Hawthorne push mower to blow $0.50 on the October 1970 issue of *Cycle*. I sat on that manicured turf, trying to figure how many lawns it would take to earn a Yamaha Mini Enduro. On that score, the pen was clearly mightier than the Hawthorne. Signing myself into untold years of indentured servitude to my Dad's land-leveling business produced an orange-and-white Yamaha JT-1 in days instead of decades. Ride now. Pay forever.

Through some combination of perseverance, parental largess and the grace of God I survived amateur motocross, puberty, high school and college. Then, with tongue firmly in cheek, I fired up the typewriter at my first real job, and wrote a letter to *Cycle*. They were the ones who got me all strung out on this motorcycle stuff. The least they could do was show me how to make a living at it. Two weeks later, I've got the flu. The phone rings. "It's Phil." Phil who? "Phil Schilling, editor of *Cycle* magazine." The rest, as they say is history. *Cycle* fell victim to corporate maneuvering and the irrepressible Jeff Karr initiated my defection to *Motorcyclist*. Timing really is everything.

All was right with the world for a good long time. Then, a few thousand free T-shirts later, I heard voices. Have you ever considered a career in *advertising*? It was a well-worn path followed by many moto-journalists before me: learn your chops at a magazine, wrangle a plush agency job, and move to Malibu with a supermodel. Fewer words. More money. Armani wool instead of Bates leather. Why not?

There turned out to be a lot of reasons why not. Some are probably actionable. None were pretty. On the bright side, I met a lot of nice people. I developed an astonishing tolerance for frustration. Then something else became painfully clear: The Malibu beach-house scenario, if it ever materialized, would have to come with a soundproof rubber room, Armani straightjacket and time-share cell at the Betty Ford Center. Still, it took two more trips through the ad wringer to recollect what I knew in sixth grade: Motorcycle magazine editors have the best jobs on earth.

Before you lose the front trying to get ahead of me, this isn't the warm/fuzzy, pre-manufactured "There's no place like home" screed wherein I wake up from a bad dream and you are there, *and you and you and you!* It's about finally realizing that the kid behind the mower was right all along. He knew who to listen to and who to ignore. He *did* ignore the voice that said a vacant cul-de-sac was an inappropriate venue for historical re-enactments of the '70 Astrodome Short Track National, but that's another story. Somewhere between that lawn and this desk, I lost track of all that. The late Frank Zappa said, "You could make more money as a butcher," and he was probably right. I can tell a real Mexican poncho from a Sears poncho now, but I had to learn the hard way. This is what I do. I'm back.

Tim

VRJ

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